STUDENTS' COMPANION SERIES

D. H. Lawrence

WOMEN IN LOVE

By

H. Newman

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PREFACE

THE present 'Guide' is so designed as to facilitate to students' understanding of Lawrence's *Women in Love*, which is rightly regarded as the most characteristic masterpiece of that gifted novelist. While presenting the chapter-wise summary of the novel, and discussing the various aspects of it—its peculiar structure, the art of characterisation, the philosophy of sexual love and connected themes of the book, and its style and symbolism, care has been taken to reproduce, as much as possible, the actual words of the author, because the real charm of Lawrence lies in his style, and no summary of his writing, however correct and competent, can keep that charm intact. It is hoped that this 'Guide' will be found completely free from that 'cheapness' which is generally associated with the writings of this class. The perceptive reader will find here a 'digest' of the best Lawrence criticism presented in a simple and delightful style, with copious extracts from the text, calculated to enhance his interest in and understanding of one of the most fascinating and controversial figures in the domain of the modern English fiction.

AUTHOR

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I

D. H. Lawrence (1885-1930)

LIFE AND WORKS

DAVID Herbert Lawrence was a writer of romantic temperament and managed to weave his life experiences into his writings, so that a knowledge of his life and experiences is indispensable for a right understanding and appreciation of his works. His genius was at once fertile and versatile and he has left behind a respectable body of works—novels, short stories, essays, literary and descriptive, and collections of poems, besides, a large number of letters, quite a few of which are fairly illuminating. We are, however, concerned here mainly with his novels, which will occupy our attention exclusively.

Lawrence was the fourth child of a miner, born on September 11, 1885, at Eastwood, about 8 miles north-west of Nottingham. His childhood was spent in the countryside famous for coal mines, which had not yet been converted into the ugly industrial region. The miners walked through the fields to work : they were manual workers who took pride in their work. His father was an uneducated miner, impulsive, stout hearted and fond of wine, women, music and dance. But his mother was an educated, middle class lady of refinement and puritanical disposition who met her man 'at a party at Nottingham, and was attracted by his graceful dancing, his musical voice, his gallant manner and his overflowing humour and good spirits.' Very soon after her marriage, however, she was disillusioned and her love was changed into bitterness. The conflict between the parents created a very uncomfortable situation for the children, who came to look at their father through the eyes of their mother and developed a complex which Freud has christened as Oedipus Complex.

"In a poem written toward the end of his life, Lawrence speaks of the parental oppositions in a sociological sense. The mother, in carrying her warfare to the father, was purity against bestiality, decency against drunkenness, education against ignorance, but above every thing, she was Victorian bourgeoise against industrial proletarian." His mother, thus, was the greatest single influence on

Lawrence, who owed his escape from the fate of a coalminer's son and his schooling for a more respectable life and profession to her insistence, that her sons should be kept out of the mines and her daughters must marry above the working class. Yet it is not hard to guess that Lawrence's respect for virility in the earthmen and his obsession with darkness were derived from the image of his father. One may recall here the words of Paul, the young hero in *Sons and Lovers*, who stands for Lawrence himself :—'The difference between the people isn't in their class, but in themselves. Only from the middle class one gets ideas, and from the common people—life itself, warmth'.

Lawrence himself has summarized the chief events of his life before the commencement of his writing career in the following words :

> "I was a delicate pale brat with a snuffy nose, whom most people treated quite gently as just an ordinary delicate little lad. When I was twelve I got a country council scholarship, twelve pounds a year, and went to Nottingham High School. After leaving school I was a clerk for three months, then had a very serious pneumonia illness, in my seventeenth year that damaged my health for life. A year later, I became a school teacher, and after three years' savage teaching of collier lads. I went to take 'the normal course' in Nottingham University. As I was glad to leave school, I was glad to leave college. It had meant more disillusion, instead of the living contact of men. It was while I was at Croydon, when I was twentythree, that the girl (Jessie Chambers by name) who had been the chief friend of my youth, and who was herself a school teacher in a mining village, copied out some of my poems, and without telling me, sent them to *English Review*, where they were printed. The girl had launched me, like a princess cutting a thread, launching a ship."

In the year 1911, *The White Peacock*, Lawrence's first novel was published in both England and America. The novel has traces of immaturity, especially in style, but it shows Lawrence's potentialities which were developed in course of time. The background is vividly painted and reminds us of the countryside of his youth around Eastwood, but all traces of mines have been carefully excluded. The story is told in the first person by a youngman named Cyril, whose sister, Lettie, marries Leslie. The love story does not come to life, but the friendship between Cyril and George Saxton, an earthy farmer's son, has all the warmth and vitality of Lawrentian manner, and borders on homosexuality.

Among the characters most interesting is Annable, a game keeper, who seems to be the first sketch of Mellors in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. He had been to Cambridge, become a parson and married Lady Crystabel, only to find her a cold-hearted prude. He

gives up his wife and his profession, settles in a cottage with a country woman with her brood of children, "He was a man of one idea—that all civilization was a painted fungus of rottenness. He hated any sign of culture. A white peacock appears now and then and becomes the symbol of 'the very soul of lady, all vanity, screech and defilement', says the gamekeeper.

Lawrence's second novel, *The Trespasser* (1912), is compact, concise and full-blooded. It is the story of Siegmund, a violinist, who at the age of 38 gives up his wife and children to go on a holiday with Helena, a school teacher of 26, who had taken lessons in music from him. It means 'a breaking of bonds, a severing of blood-ties, a sort of new-birth' to him. But he is doomed to be disillusioned, and the shock comes from their very first encounter. He was 'a tense, vivid body of flesh without mind', but 'she belonged to that class of 'dreaming women' with whom passion exhausts itself at the mouth'. The first kiss evacuates her desire.

She was drawn from life ; her model being a school teacher who was Lawrence's close friend in his Croydon days ; and there is, therefore, a personal experience in the sketch of a woman who only dreams of love and cannot endure its reality. The one obvious mark of the improvement in the present novel over its predecessor is to be found in the fact that the setting which was only a background in the first novel, has been absorbed here in the human drama :

> "In the intense joy and suffering of his realised passion, the island, with its sea and sky, had fused till, like a brilliant bead, all their beauty ran together out of the common ore, and Siegmund saw it naked in the shifting magic of this bead'. Indeed, the lovers are transported in a mythological world, as it were, free from the realities of the common every day life."

In the first two novels Lawrence did not show any mark of the new direction in which he was eventually able to carry the novel. But in his third-book, *Sons and Lovers*, his first masterpiece, the break from the orthodox fiction has become apparent, even though the narrative method is adopted and sustained with consummate skill, at least in the first half of the novel. The novel is frankly autobiographical and the diagnosis of the nature of relationship between his parents and between the young hero and the girls he loves, follows the lines of Freudian psychology.

The scene of action is Bestwood, which stands for Eastwood of Lawren's childhood, which still retained vestiges of the old rural England. The hero, Paul Morel is Lawrence himself, and his parents are thinly disguised in Mr. and Mrs. Morel of the novel. The woman is described as puritanical, high-minded, educated, a scion of 'an old 'burgher', congregationalist family, a 'lady' in essence, who happens to encounter the Miner, Morel, and is at once captivated by his sensuous manliness : 'the dusky, golden softness of this man's sensuous flame of life, that flowed off his flesh like the flame

from a candle, not baffled and gripped into incandescence by thought and spirit as her life was, seemed to her something wonderful, beyond her'. The marriage comes off a year later and all the romantic glamour of the union soon fades into the thin air, as the woman is brought face to face with the common daylight realities.

'His nature was purely sensuous, and she strove to make him moral, religious.' The conflict which arose before long drove the husband into the pub again, leaving the wife to her love, brooding and fretting. The first child was born in bitterness, and the second came with the total loss of love between the parents, and the emotional gap in the heart of the mother was naturally filled by the sons, who insensibly became the substitutes for their father. The third child was Paul Morel, who like Lawrence was sickly and delicate and commanded a greater share of the mother's love and solicitude : "In her arms lay the delicate baby. Its deep blue eyes, always looking up at her unblinking, seemed to draw her innermost thoughts out of her. She no longer loved her husband ; she had not wanted this child to come, and there it lay in her arms and pulled at her heart. She felt as if the navel string that had connected its frail little body with hers had not been broken. A wave of hot love went over her to the infant."

The psychological complex named after Oedipus of Thebes, celebrated in the two world-famous Greek tragedies by Sophocles, may briefly be diagnosed as follows :

> "The children see their father with their mother's eyes, and all unite against him...His wife's civilised manners have no effect on him......and his grossness and drunkenness only exacerbate his wife's sensitivity. So the children grow up to despise their father, and Mrs. Morél determines that her sons will never become miners. They will be educated and will get 'superior' jobs as clerks. The children are brought up as earnest teetotallers and when William, the eldest, starts going to dances his mother violently disapproves. Had she not met Morel at a dance ?"

William becomes a successful business man, moves to London and falls in love with a 'lady' of expensive habits and capricious mind. They are engaged and the mother is deeply concerned at the prospect of their marriage. William, however, dies suddenly of pneumonia and his mother is plunged into blank disconsolation from which she recovers slowly while nursing Paul who is attacked by the same ailment shortly after the death of William. From this time onwards Paul becomes the anchor of her life and love, and the endearments which they frequently exchange sound more as the exchanges of lovers than as the talks of mother and son. The meaning is that Paul has become the victim of Oedipus Complex and his emotional relationship with other girls is not likely to be natural and healthy. This marks the end of the first book, decidedly the most vivid, realistic and brilliant part of the novel. The second

book takes up the psychological problem, which arises when Paul develops a feeling of love for a girl named Miriam, who is modelled upon Jessie Chambers, whose surroundings, habits and natural disposition are faithfully reproduced. Jessie herself collaborated in the preparation of this part of the story, but the final draft was prepared without her knowledge and on reading it she complained that Lawrence was at last influenced by his mother's point of view and did scant injustice to her and to the actual nature of their relationship. The description of the farm and the countryside is vivid and true and the record of its effect on the nature and character of the girl is quite psychological, though apparently paradoxical. Paul says that the continual business of birth and begetting which goes on upon every farm made Miriam 'hypersensitive to the matter, and her blood was chastened almost to disgust of the faintest suggestion of such intercourse'. So their intimacy went on in a chaste and bloodless fashion. Miriam was educated and romantic, but her dreams centred round the distinction gained through learning. She stimulated Paul's artistic urge, but chilled his sex instinct. The young man had to extract his cold comfort from his reflection that 'a good many of the nicest men he knew were like him, bound in by their own virginity, which they could not break out of.........They could easier deny themselves than incur any reproach from a woman ; for a woman was their mother, and they were full of the sense of their mother'. Paul, however, forces the issue and compels Miriam to yield, but the experience brings a sense of defeat and failure. They break off and part, and Miriam gives him a parting blow with her remark that 'their love had been always a conflict'. Paul realised that it was a victory for his mother whose influence was not likely to be overcome by another woman. Yet his blood was clamouring for recognition and thec all of sex could no more be ignored. He, therefore, fell in love with Clara Dawes, a 'new woman', educated, married but separated from her husband. She lacked spiritual depth, but had her full share of the warmth of mature womanhood. Their sexual union was ardent and enthusiastic, but could not give lasting satisfaction. They were scarcely any nearer to each other and Clara was eventually persuaded to get reconciled to her worthless husband. Clara had no original in Lawrence's real life. She is a composite figure compounded of the traits of several women who came in contact with him before his marriage.

The rudest blow for Paul was the death of his mother after a slow and painful illness. It leaves him prostrate and stupified, but before long gleams of hopes manifest themselves to his eyes out of the mist and darkness, and he resolves to face his unknown future.

Sons and Lovers, which placed Lawrence in the rank of recognised novelists, marks the end of the first phase of his life. It closes the chapter in which his life was dominated by two women, his mother and Jessie Chambers, whose place was finally and permanently filled by the German lady who became his wife and his lifelong companion and adviser. This lady was Frieda, wife of

professor Ernest Weekley, of Nottingham University. She was six years older than Lawrence and was already the mother of three children when she met him. She was the daughter of Baron von Richthofen, a German aristocrat and soldier and had married a professor fifteen years older than herself. She was leading a superficial life of comfort and contentment, and her contact with Lawrence suddenly opened the golden vista of real fulfilment. The heart of the mother in her protested against her adventure in love but the call of her deep soul prevailed. She eloped with Lawrence in 1912, when the *Sons and Lovers* was also completed. For two years the lovers were wandering from place to place on the Continent and they were able to marry only in July 1914 after Frieda had been granted divorce from her first husband. In this interval of two years Lawrence was working on his two masterpieces *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love* which mark the culmination of Lawrence's peculiar art and philosophy of life.

Lawrence's changed outlook, incorporated in the two novels, which are the crowning achievement of the second phase of his career. are manifest from the series of letters he wrote to Edward Garnett in 1913-14 while sending the drafts of the book for his criticism. The first title of the book was *The Sisters*, which was changed to *The Wedding Ring*, and finally the novel came to be known as *The Rainbow*. And the materials left over went into the making of *Women in Love*, which followed it. That these books mark a departure from the conventional narrative and autobiographical mode adopted by Lawrence in *Sons and Lovers*, is quite apparent from his pronouncements in the letters addressed to Garnett :

> "I have no longer the joy in creating vivid scenes, that I had in *Sons and Lovers*. All the time, underneath there is something deep evolving itself out of me". You mustn't look in my novel for the old stable ego of the character......I think it's great—so new, so really a stratum deeper than I think anybody has ever gone, in a novel."

So *The Rainbow* is a novel with an originality of technique, which discards a clear-cut narrative and the development of characters through action. The centre of interest lies here in the presentation of the theme of emotional relationship between man and woman in a number of episodes and through different human couples. The theme is developed through characters of three generations of a single family (the Brangwen family). The family has lived for generations on its hereditary Marsh Farm in perfect tune with 'the rhythm of nature'.

"They felt the rush of the sap in the spring, they knew the wave which cannot halt, but every year throws forward the seed to begetting, and, falling back, leaves the young born on the earth...Their life and inter-relations were such, feeling the pulse and body of the soil, that opened to their furrow for the grain, and became smooth

and supple after their ploughing, and clung to their feet with a weight that pulled like desire, lying hard and unresponsive when the crops were shorn away'. So much warmth and generating and pain and death did they know in their blood......their faces always turned to the heat of the blood, staring into the sun, dazed with looking towards the source of generation, unable to turn round. But the women wanted another form of life...something that was not blood-intimacy......She faced outwards to where men moved dominant and creative, having turned their back on the pulsing heat of creation, and with this behind them, were set out to discover what was beyond, to enlarge their own scope and range, and freedom. The result was that in the eyes of men the women became the symbol of religion and morality, images of their own mothers'. This is illustrated from the character of Tom, who is torn between sexual desire and his belief in the sanctity of the female body. He is filled with hatred and fear of sex and constant sexual desires. This young man receives his first electric shock from his chance encounter with a Polish lady, Lydia Lensky, a widowed mother of a girl and housekeeper for the vicar. The impact of her presence on Tom is thus described :

"It was as if a strong light were burning there (in his heart) and he was blind within it, unable to know anything, except that this transfiguration burned between him and her, connecting them, like a secret power". They, of course, meet and talk and finally marry, though they are really strangers to each other. No wonder if their relationship begins to lose its charm, and while the woman becomes pregnant and is one day in labour Tom goes out into the shed, with his terrified step daughter, to feed his cows. With superb skill Lawrence presents the contrast between the permanent unchanging life in nature outside and the new life that was starting in pain and tension in the house of Tom. Tom and Lydia pass from one centre of consciousness into another under the law of 'becoming, which rules all generations of men and women. So the second episode begins with the love between Anna, Tom's step daughter and Will, her cousin, who enter into a normal wedlock : "All that mattered was that he should love her and she should love him and they should live kindled to one another, like the Lord in two burning bushes that were not consumed. And so they lived for the time. But the course of love in Lawrence never runs smooth, and soon after their romantic honeymoon is over the conflict between the husband and the wife comes to the surface. The centre of this conflict, in the first instance, is religion. Will has a passion for the Church, for symbols and rituals of religion and for the miracles associated with it, while his wife ridicules and mocks at his religious ecstasies. The situation is reminiscent of the conflict between Lawrence and Frieda on this very score. So they begin to drift apart : Will becoming more and more superficial, and his wife more and more absorbed in the rearing of her children. They are caught by the tide of becoming.

Ursula, their eldest daughter, continues the story in the third

of her soldier lover and plunges into bouts of sexual pleasures with him. But their love is only physical and does not touch her soul. She refuses to marry him and he has to proceed to India all alone. She is left pregnant, suffers the torture of abortion, but ultimately feels the stirrings of a new life in her cold breast : "She was the naked, clear kernel thrusting forth the clear, powerful shoot, and the world was a bygone winter, discarded, her mother, and father and Anton, and college and all her friends, all cast off like a year that has gone by, whilst the kernel was free and naked and striving to take new root'. So she has hopes for a new birth and one day the vision of a rainbow appears as a promise for the fulfilment of her hope : 'She saw in the rainbow the earth's new architecture, the old brittle corruption of houses and factories swept away, the world built up in a living fabric of truth, fitting to the overarching heaven."

The Rainbow, thus, outlines Lawrence's sexual mysticism, which is taken up, and directly as well as dramatically elaborated in *Women in Love*, which has been described as its sequel. Ursula appears in this novel also, but not as an active preacher of the author's philosophy of love : this role is taken over by her lover who slowly, patiently and at times bitterly and painfully carries this reluctant and intransigent vessel of love and loyalty, along with him towards the final consummation in their marriage, which is the union of two equal and independent individuals, the equilibrium of two stars.

The Rainbow was published on September 30, 1915 and was suppressed in the first week of November by a police court as an indecent book, and *The Daily Express* described it as 'an obscene novel to be Destroyed—Worse than Zola'. Lawrence wrote about the event nine years later : "Methuen published that book and he almost wept before the magistrate, when he was summoned for bringing out a piece of indecent literature. He said he did not know the dirty thing he had been handling, he had not read the work, his reader had misadvised him'. Lawrence was bewildered but obstinately stuck to the point that it was not only a big book, but an innocent book. In reply to Arnold Bennett's charge of faulty construction, he wrote to his agent :

> "Tell Arnold Bennet that all rules of construction hold good only for novels which are copies of other novels. A book which is not the copy of other books has its own construction, and what he calls faults, he being an old imitator, I call characteristics."

Lawrence, however, had been ill at ease ever since the outbreak of War. In January 1915 he wrote to W. E. Hopkin :

> "I want to gather together about twenty souls and sail away from this world of war and squalor and found a little colony where there shall be no money but a sort of communism as far as necessaries of life go, and some real decency."

The horror of war, 'of humanity lacerating itself is most forcibly expressed in a letter he wrote to Lady Cynthia Asquith early in 1915. He informs her that when the war broke out he had been in Westmoreland, and was happy and gay, but war blasted him completely for the moment......'things have not existed for me. I have spoken to no one, I have touched no one, I have seen no one. All the while, I swear, my soul lay in the tomb—not dead, but with a flat stone over it, a corpse, become corpse cold......and all the time I knew I should have to rise again." He was now and then harassed by the police on account of his German wife.

He had been ill and on recovering decided to grow beard which he found, 'hideous though it looked, to be warm and complete and a good clothing to one's nakedness'. Above all, he was hampered for lack of funds to enable him to sail for America. Some friends collected the necessary amount, procured the pass-port, but the scheme fell through as the Government would not endorse the pass-port. Lawrence had grown bitter and cynical and broken with many of his friends. It was against this background that his next novel, *Women in Love* was completed by December 1916. As already stated the two novels are linked together by Ursula, though her role as a mystic of love has been changed altogether. Beside her there stands her Sister, Gudrun, a negligible figure in *The Rainbow*, but her foil and co-rival in the present novel. "Lawrence put several of his recent friends into the novel ; Lady Ottoline Morrell is caricatured as the dominating Hermione Roddice, and Russell makes a brief but unmistakable appearance as Sri Joshua Mallleson, 'a learned, dry, baronet of fifty who was always making witticisms and laughing at them heartily, in a harsh horse-laugh'. Some of his statements are points taken from Russell's philosophy."

Murry and Katherine Mansfield are also there, but they are thickly disguised as Gerald Crich and Gudrun. They are recognised by certain incidents associated with their actual lives. The outward aspects of Gerald seem to have been borrowed from Thomas Philip Barber, a famous coal miner who became a major during the war. The novel has a bitter vein of social satire, but its central theme is Lawrence's philosophy of love between man and woman, which is explained at tedious length by Birkin, the mouthpiece of the novelist, and worked out in the Birkin-Ursula story, which receives further definition and illumination from the Gerald-Gudrun story, which is in sharp contrast to it.

The novel which followed *Women in Love* was *The Lost Girl* which was finished in Sicily in May 1920 and published in course of the same year. Lawrence called the piece quite amusing and moral, which means that it lacks Lawrence's peculiar depth and moral intensity. It tells the story of a Midlands girl, who escapes boredom of her narrow life by becoming a nurse and later on marrying an Italian strolling player. The first part gives a vivid, realistic picture of Midlands mining town, but the climax is marked by the

Italian part towards the end, which describes the primitive peasant life, which Lawrence was to extol. The novel introduces the important motif of later Lawrence—the Anglo-Saxon woman becoming a dark man's mate. Alvina, the heroine is first fascinated by the Italian, Cicio, who turns out to be a mindless man. So she rebels ; leaves home to join the troupe and on reaching Laveaster parts from it and becomes a midwife. She rejects the offer of a middle-aged Scots bachelor doctor but succumbs to the entreaties of Cicio as he once more crosses her path. She marries him and makes a long wartime journey, which is described with the characteristic Lawrentian verve and vividness. She is not quite happy in that rural surrounding of bitter coldness, squalor and indigence, and becomes a 'lost girl' indeed as Cicio leaves home and she is tied to a dull existence, all alone and pregnant, but not without hope that her husband will return home to take her away to America.

We now enter upon the third phase of Lawrence's literary career. Disgusted with the prolongation of the bloody war Lawrence went into voluntary exile at the end of it. He arrived in Italy in 1919 and started 'wandering round the Mediterranean, and then going to India, Australia and America. Meanwhile he composed three novels, besides his best poems, three novels dealing with the problem of mystical-political leadership, which bear witness to his serious quest for social certainty, in the haunts of primitive, uncivilized humanity.

In these novels we feel a loss of artistic excellence and emotional vitality, resulting in a decline of the stylistic vigour and fire.

Aaron's Rod, the first of the three leadership novels was completed in 1921. The story opens soon after the war with Aaron Sisson, a miner's check-weigh man, running away from his wife and children on Christmas Eve ; out of boredom resulting from his sense of 'imprisonment' in his twelve years' married life of cheerless domesticity. He goes to London, becomes a flutist in the Covent Gardens Orchestra and comes in contact with Lilly, who takes interest in him and nurses him with feminine solicitude in his illeness But he is all the while meditating within himself that 'the fool' would leave him as soon as he recovers and his wife Tanny would approve his action, as 'she says I want power over them. This rouses his spleen and he launches upon a long stream of tirade and abuse against women and children. But it has become the habit of most of the male characters in this novel. The centre here has shifted from sexual relationship to that between one man and another, which is not friendship but the relation of one man in authority with another man who obeys him. Lilly goes to Italy under the belief that 'a new place brings a new thing in a man'. His stay in Italy gives the novelist an opportuinty to present his acute observation and criticisim of Englishmen in Italy. Poor Aaron also goes there on Lilly's invitation and finds the place

to be the perfect centre of the human world' till he is robbed of his purse by a gang of Italian soldiers, has witnessed a violent demonstration and had his flute destroyed in a bomb outrage. He conceives a sudden passion for the American-born wife of an Italian, with musical gift, but as he sleeps with her the conviction takes possession of his mind that 'this is not my woman'. So he returns to his old friend and pupil Lilly. The novel is a failure both in style and execution and betrays Lawrence.

Kangaroo, the next novel, was the product of Lawrence's visit to Australia with his wife and in the novel they appear as Somers and Harriet. It is the autumn of their married life, when the heat of love has subsided into a tranquil sentiment and they have given up the practice of sleeping together. The placid current of domestic life, however, is frequently disturbed by their conflict and dispute over the problem whether man must go beyond marriage for relation with other people. Harriet-Frieda desperately strives to keep him confined to herself, which is easy to understand when we remember that they were lonely, rootless wanderers, without even children to relieve their monotony. Somers-Lawrence sees a terrible dream in which a woman, who is a compound of his mother and his wife, accuses him of his betrayal of their love of a personal being by trying to become 'the impersonal man, a man that would go beyond them, with his back to them, away from them into an activity that excluded them. The man pleads passionately—"I want to do something with living people, somewhere, some how, while I live on the earth. I write, but write alone. And I live alone without any connection whatever with the rest of men'. To this his wife retorts writing is 'doing' enough for him and he is simply courting disappointment in his effort to forge links with mankind. This shakes his desire for leadership because he is convinced that his wife is right. The novel is remarkable for its evocative description of the Australian background and the middle-class suburban life. They are told about a secret political organisation of ex-servicemen's club, headed by a Jewish lawyer in Sydney named Kangaroo. The whole episode is Lawrence's invention, but Kangaroo himself is well conceived and vividly persented and so is the love-hate relationship between Somers and Kangaroo. Lawrence, however, makes a clean breast about his scepticism concerning the efficacy of political activities to change the world for the better and his feeling that 'it is time to turn to the gods'. The spell of politics, however, is not yet broken; he meets the Willie Stuthers, a labour leader who offers him the editorship of a socialist paper and takes him by surprise with his appeal to 'his working-class feeling and 'to the love of a man for his mate'. This idea, however, is rejected by Somers outright because 'absolute love for a mate would be as fatal as absolute love for a woman: When human love starts out to lock individuals together, it is just courting desire'. He goes to Kangaroo and expresses himself bluntly: 'Don't love me. Let's be hard separate men'. This drives the Jew

into a frenzy of indignation who threatens him with expulsion from the country. This is the climax of the political part of the novel which is vivid, exciting and powerfully conceived. After this comes a stretch of pure autobiography, presenting the experiences of Lawrence and his wife during the war. The bitterest part of his tirade against war was what he regarded 'as the invasion of his privacy, the desire of the authorities to humiliate him as a separate, single man'. The whole passage pulsates with a sort of hysterical indignation of outraged conscience at the prying police agents : "oh, foul dogs......they were very close on him now, very close. They were grinning very close behind him, like hyenas just going to bite. Yes, they were running him to earth......And because they had handled his private parts and looked into them, their eyes should burst and their hands should wither and their hearts should rot. So he cursed them in his blood, with an unremitting curse, as he waited'.

Equally bitter is his spleen at the doctors who examined him in his own Midlands region, whose harshness bred in him a hatred for the natives of the place. He betrays clear symptoms of a persecution complex : 'These horrible machine people, these iron and coal people. They wanted to set their foot violently on life, grind it down and be master......they had looked into his anus, they had put their hands between his legs. That athletic young fellow, he didn't seem to think he should mind it at all. He looked on his body as a sort of piece of furniture, or a machine, to be handled and put to various uses'. This inhuman treatment was meted out to 'one of the most intensely English littlemen England ever produced. But no, they persisted he was a foreigner".

Towards the end of the novel, Kangaroo is badly wounded in a street fight in Sidney between two political factions. In the hospital the wounded leader tells Somers that it is he who is killing him and the latter understands his meaning and says to himself, "It is the collapse of the love ideal. I suppose it means chaos and anarchy in the name of love and equality. The only thing one may stick to is one's own isolate being and the God in whom it is rooted. And the only thing to look to is the God who fulfils one from the dark. And the only thing to wait for is for men to find their aloneness and their God in the darkness. Then one can meet as worshippers, in a sacred contract in the dark'.

A few years later Lawrence commented on the permanent significance of man's disgust with political panacea and promises : "Once be disillusioned with the man made world, and you can still see the magic, the beauty, the delicate realness of all the other life". The novel is a brilliant illustration of the truth of this remark. In spite of its deep concern with the man-made world the novel is 'full of all that 'other life of nature'—the stony, druidical atmosphere of Cornwall, the strange little Australian coast towns, the changing moods of the southern ocean, the mystery and terror of brush,

Sidney's 'many-lobed' harbour, Hampstead Heath in a war-time autumn—all done by Lawrence at the height of his powers as a descriptive writer. *Kangaroo* underscores Lawrence's conviction : "Man's isolation was always a supreme truth and fact, not to be forsworn. And the mystery of apartness And the greater mystery of the dark God beyond man". The 'dark gods' defy clear-cut definition. They are 'forever unrealisable, and are rooted in the profound subconscious, and offer a 'complete antithesis to the spiritual-ideal', possessively loving God of Christianity, who is 'a proposition of the mental consciousness".

This change, however, needed the atmoshere of a new place for its effective expression in a work of art. In his essay, 'New Mexico' Lawrence observes :

'I had looked all over the world for something that would strike *me* as religious. The simple piety of some English people, the semi-pagan mystery of some Catholics in southern Italy, the intensity of some Bavarian peasants, the semi-ecstasy of Buddhists and Brahmins : all this had seemed religious all right, as far as the parties concerned were involved, but it didn't involve me......I had no permanent feeling of religion till I came to New Mexico and penetrated into the old race-experience there." This experience forms the core of his next novel, *The Plumed Serpent* which came out in 1926, and was declared to be his best work by the novelist himself, who however, wavered in his judgement later on.

The central figure is Kate Leslie, an Irish widow of forty with grown up children, whose sexual excitement and zest for life are on the ebb and who desires 'to be alone with the unfolding flower of her own soul, in the delicate chiming silence that is at the midst of things." She goes to witness a bull fight in the city of Mexico with two American male companions and is disgusted with the cruel ugly scene and also with the 'squalid evil' which seems to pervade the atmosphere of the whole city. She is inclined to go away when one day her mind is arrested by an item in a newspaper—'The Gods of of Antiquity Return to Mexico." It is reported that a man of great stature had been seen to rise naked from the Lake of Sayula, in the remote interior of the country and walk to the shore to inform the astonished peasants that the old gods—especially Quetzalcoatl (The Plumed Serpent) were about to come to them. Kate finds in the report 'a strange beam of wonder and mystery' and loses no time to start on her journey to the Lake, thus offering the novelist an opportunity to paint a very vivid and evocative picture of the landscape, charged with 'the delicate, tender mystery of the new faith'. Kate crosses the Lake in an atmosphere of mystery, takes a house in the town of Sayula, a place of fake civilization, declining into primitivism, surrounded by a countryside 'half-wild, murderous, and full of bandits'. She goes to see the Saturday-night scene in Plaza and gradually succums to the solemn ritual, the dance and the music of a tom-tom and flute which recalls 'the timeless, primeval passion of

the prehistoric races, with their intense and complicated religious significance'. Then comes the announcement of the death of Christ and the advent of the new god, Quetzalcoatl. This is followed by a wheeling group dance which Kate eventually joins and 'feels herself transported into a new life of greater womanhood'.

The new religion gathers momentum and in course of time it becomes clear that the representative of the deity of this religion is Don Ramon, whose wife, Dona Carlota, being a devout Christian stands opposed to him. Their fight results in the death of Carlota, which synchronizes with the re-birth of the white Kate. Her spirituality however is crossed by the hot sexual urge aroused by the primeval magic of Don Cipriano, the chief disciple of Ramon : she wanted to be covered with deep and living darkness, the deep where Cipriano could lay her'. She was convinced of one thing 'that the clue to all living and to all moving—on into new living lay in the vivid blood relation between man and woman. Out of this clue of togetherness between a man and a woman, the whole of the new life arose. It was the quick of the whole'. She marries him according to the rites of the new religion and finds complete sexual fulfilment, a flowering of all her body in the union with her priestly mate.

She recalls to herself the condition of the civilized women known to her who, at her age 'lost all their charm and allure, and turned into real grimalkins, greyish, avid, and horrifying, prowling around looking for prey that became scarcer and scarcer'.

Kate is disillusioned in the long run as she discovers that her new mate is actually a mindless man, yet is consoled by the thought that this life is at least better than that of the lonely old widow in a narrow society at home.

Commenting upon Lawrence's astonishing attempt to create new rituals and paraphernalia of his primitive religion a critic has perceptively commented :

> "He constructed a complete liturgy, produced enough hymns to fill a small book, and elaborately described costumes and ceremonies. These are not so much ridiculous as boring—a monument of misused talent. Yet the most damning criticism of this religion-making is that Lawrence is going against his own deepest instincts by producing a mechanical and too conscious systematisation of what should have been intuitive and unconscious. The 'dark gods' are intuitively felt in the depths of human psyche : by bringing them to the surface and cluttering them up with clap trap, Lawrence effectively kills them, leaving only a collection of images as tawdry as those thrown out of the Church as Sayula when Christianity was expelled."

At the end of the novel, therefore, we are left with the wonderful sense of the beauty and power of sex, felt by a woman who was

of the same age as the novelist himself and seems to be voicing his conviction in her meditation ; "It is sex", she said to herself, "How wonderful sex can be, when men keep it powerful and sacred, and it fills the worldlike sunshine through and through one ! This is the theme of his 'direct phallic book', *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, which represents the fourth and last phase of Lawrence's literary career.

"*Lady Chatterley's Lover* is undoubtedly the most generally known of Lawrence's books, but it owes its fame to its history of legal repression rather than to its intrinsic merit. For thirtytwo years after its first publication (in Florence in 1928) the book was banned in England. This is not to say that it did not circulate : the eminence of its author and the reputation of its contents ensured a steady import of copies from the Continent secreted about the persons of returning travellers, and a consequent circulation amongst the universities, schools, clubs, and messes of the kingdom. Thus, the authorities by their ban showed that the book and its theme should be treated exactly the way that Lawrence most deplored : that makes sex a furtive, forbidden, shameful matter of momentary titillation." In this novel, Lawrence wrote fuller descriptions of the manifestations of love than had ever been written before in serious literature in English, and he put into the mouths of his characters words that are not used in the genteel society he had hated from the time when he was a miner's boy'.

The novel returns to Lawrence's native place in the English Midlands and against the background of spreading ugliness and mechanization of human body and soul occasioned by Industrialism, it tells the story of Connie Chattley, daughter of a Royal Academician, who meets and marries Clifford Chatterley during the War of 1914-1918, 'a well to-do intelligentsia wedding aristocracy'. They settle in their big, dreary house—Wragly Hall—in the industrial Midlands where Clifford becomes a writer and wins an easy and rapid success. The lady fully co-operates with him in his mental work, which leaves the body unsatisfied. Her first sexual experience with the playwright, Michaelis causes great thrill and excitement in her and emboldens her to stimulate her husband, only to learn that he attaches greater importance to 'the long life lived together than to the casual delight of sexual union'. The reaction on the mind of the poor lady is stunning and she finds that life has become empty of all meaning—Love, joy, happiness, home, etc. 'the great dynamic words were half-dead now, dying from day to day. 'As for sex, the last of great words, it was just a cocktail term for an excitement that bucked you up for a while, then left you more raggy than ever'. She pines and falls ill and gradually gets away from her husband, who has to be nursed and entertained by Mrs. Bolton the housekeeper, whose stories about colliers and their lives turn the mind of Clifford towards the ownership and recognization of the mines. He is slowly immersed into his business, like 'the Industrial magnate in *Women in Love* and his poor wife is left lonely and desolate, seeking his crumb of solace in her excursion into the wood nearby and

especially to the small clearing where Mellors, the gamekeeper, rears the pheasants. This gamekeeper is the alter ego of Lawrence himself being the son of a miner, but educated. He also has had. sex-experiences with two girls and, like Lawrence, is a bitter critic of our industrial civilization. But as a game keeper at Midland Cottages he is rooted in the soil, a symbol of natural life and vitality and thus quite fit for providing fulfilment to a forlorn sex-starved lady. He takes pity on Connie, who appears to be a tender flower likely to be blasted by 'the iron world and the Mammon of mechanized greed'. So they fall in love and enter into sexual relationship. With superb skill Lawrence has reproduced in words and rhythm the physical ecstasy born of actual sex-fulfilment and the ineffable calm which settles on the mind and soul of the shy, shame-faced lady.

"She quivered again at the potent inexorable entry inside her, so strange and terrible. It might come with the thrust of a sword in her softy-opened body and that would be death. She clung in a sudden anguish of terror. But it came with a strange, slow thrust of peace and a ponderous, primordial tenderness such as made the world in the beginning. And her terror subsided in her breast, her breast dared to be gone in peace, she held nothing. She dared to let go everything, all herself, and he gone in the flood......As she ran home in the twilight the world seemed a dream, the trees in the dark seemed bulging and surging at anchor on a tide, and the heave of the slope to the house was alive. The novelist comments on the psychological state of the lady after she had tasted the real sex experience :

> "In the short summer nights she learnt so much. She would have thought a woman would have died of shame. Instead of which the shame died. Shame, which is fear ; the deep organic shame, the old, old physical fear which crouches in the bodily roots of us, and can only be chased away by the sexual fire, at last it was roused up and rooted by the phallic hunt of the man. She felt, now, she had come to the real bed-rock of her nature and was essentially shameless. She was her sensual self, naked and unashamed."

So Lady Chatterley finds peace and fulfilment, with her heart at ease and her womb fertilized, looking forward to her future of domestic felicity with the man who had given her 'an exquisite pleasure and a sense of freedom and life, by releasing her warm sexual flow.

This story of life and fulfilment is presented against the story of Sir Clifford and his world which symbolize death-in-life. He is described as a 'hurt thing', a 'lost thing' and his wife feels, that at the core of him there is only 'a negation of human contact'. He begins as a spinner of words and then proceeds to become an industrial magnate who views human beings as 'functions' not as creatures of flesh and blood. He is becoming 'almost a creature,

with a hard, efficient shell of an exterior and a pulpy interior, from which two opposite vibrations come to the surface—the impulse of self-assertion and the impulse of terrified dependency. The second symbol of death-in-life is the industrial village described with all the vividness and evocative power of Lawrence, who here dips his pen into his disgust.

It is a home of ugliness, 'the utter negations of natural beauty, the utter negation of gladness of life, the utter absence of the instinct for shapely beauty which every bird and beast has, the utter death of the human intuitive faculty was appaling......Ah, God, what has man done to man ? One England blots out another. The industrial England blots out the agricultural England. One meaning blots out another......and the continuity is not organic, but mechanical.'

Lawrence wrote letters explaining the nature of his 'shocking novel'. 'It's a novel of the phallic consciousness, or the phallic consciousness versus the mental—spiritual consciousness. I want to restore the phallic consciousness into our lives : because it is the source of all real beauty, and all real gentleness'.

In reply to his hostile critics Lawrence wrote *Pornography and Obscenity* (1929) and the more elaborate *A Propos of Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1930). In the latter he observed, "The mind has an old grovelling fear of the body and the body's potentialities. It is the mind we have to liberate, to civilize on these points......Life is only bearable when the mind and the body are in harmony, and there is a natural balance between them, and each has a natural respect for the other'.

"Now that the book is at last freely available, it may be hoped that the controversy about its obscenity will die out ; and it may well be generally accepted as an improving and liberating book. In an age of free-sex and open display of the female body, in all its nakedness before the prying eyes of a crowd of spectators we should heed the advice of G.B. Shaw :

Lady Chatterley should be on the shelves of every college for budding girls. They should be forced to read it on pain of being refused a marriage licence." Our problem, and a difficult one, is to reconcile the sex-philosophy of Lawrence with the dismal theory of Malthus about the menace of growing population.

THE VICISSITUDES IN THE REPUTATION OF LAWRENCE

At the time of his death in 1930 Lawrence was still under the clouds. His *Lady Chatterley's Lover* was banned in England and America and his exhibited paintings were seized by London Police, as Mark Spilka has reminded us. In the critical evaluations during

his last days and shortly after his death he emerged as 'a sex-mad homosexual fascist, a mindless and misguided genius scarcely worthy of attention."

T.S. Eliot, one of the most prominent poets and critics of the age, attacked Lawrence in his speech published under the title, *After Strange Gods*, as well as in his preface to Fr. Tiverton's *D.H. Lawrence and Human Existence.* In the latter composition he wrote :

"He was an impatient and impulsive man......He was a man of fitful and profound insights, rather than of ratiocinative powers ; and therefore he was an impatient man ; he expressed some of his insights in the form least likely to make them acceptable to most of his contemporaries, and sometimes in a form which almost wilfully encouraged misunderstanding......Wrong he often was, I think, from ignorance, prejudice, or drawing the wrong conclusions in his conscious mind from the insights which came to him from below consciousness......To me, also, he seems often to write very badly ...... in order to write sometimes well. As for his religious attitude ......we can now begin to see how much was ignorance, rather than hostility ; for Lawrence was an ignorant man in the sense that he was unaware of how much he did not know.' 'The point is that Lawrence started life wholly free from any restriction of tradition or institution. He suffered from a lack, not so much of information, as of the lack of critical faculties, which education should give. He had no guidance except the Inner Light, the most untrustworthy, deceitful guide that ever offered itself to wandering humanity ! Misguided by that light Lawrence's vision was intensely spiritual, but also 'spiritually sick".

R.P. Blackmur, one of the New Critics, charged him with the lack of artistic discipline and exclusive reliance on inspiration : "When you depend entirely on the demon of inspiration, the inner voice, the inner light, you deprive yourself of any external criterion to show whether the demon is working or not. The deceitful inner guide—inspiration—needs external support from craft or rational imagination."

But the scene was changing and advocates were coming forward, in the forties, to give a new orientaion to the critical approach to the life and writings of Lawrence. The most gifted and fervent among them was F.R. Leavis, a formalist who brought the apparatus of New Criticism to bear upon the study and evalution of fiction. He stressed the moral value of literature and regarded a work of art as 'one in which a genuine moral vision of experience was communicated through a fully particularized, fully realized imaginative rendering of life. Every detail in a novel had to be freshly imagined and had to spring from the true depth of the writer's moral being'. He applied this test to the great novelists who formed the tradition in English fiction, in his book, *The Great Tradition* (1948). The criterion used by him in his selection of the five novelists—Jane Austen, George Eliot, Henry James, Joseph Conrad and D.H.

Lawrence, was a vital capacity for experience, a kind of reverent openness before life, and a marked moral intensity'.

In his later work : *D.H. Lawrence/Novelist* (1955) he set out to rebut the criticism of T.S. Eliot against Lawrence and to prove that the latter was even a greater genius than Eliot himself, who being an American by birth and breeding failed to gauge his real merit :

> "The point I am making", says he, in the opening chapter of the book, "is that Lawrence is incomparably the greatest creative writer in English of our time—if I say, of Eliot's time, I make plain the phase of our civilization that is in question ; he is one of the greatest English writers of any time."

The controversy about the man Lawrence was set at rest, to a large extent, by the publication, in 1951, of *The Life and Works of D.H. Lawrence*, a critical biography by Harry T. Moore, an industrious American scholar who asserted that the Works of Lawrence provide 'one of the richest reading experiences of our time'. He set the example for a number of critics and biographers who contributed fruitfully to the rehabitation of Lawrence, the man and the novelist. The present position is summed up by the editor of *The Twentieth Century Views* on *D.H. Lawrence* in the opening paragraph of his 'Introduction' :

> "Some thirty years after his death D.H. Lawrence enjoys more widespread popularity and esteem than he knew in his life time. His complete works are again in print, his tales and poems are widely autholized, two books and a tale have been made into movies. His long suppressed novel, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, has been released in England and America... . and has quickly become a best seller. A dozen critical studies, six biographies and a dozen assorted texts etc have appeared in the last decade, along with several hundred essays and unpublished dissertations In sum, his literary and popular stock has risen. He is now generally recognized as the foremost English novelist of his generation, and begins to take his place among the important modern novelists—Joyce, Mann, Proust, Faulkner, Kafka. In terms of popular audience he even begins to exceed more famous masters".

2

Women in Love

INTRODUCTION

AMONG the novels of D.H. Lawrence the place of honour has been given, by common consent, to two—*The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*. They grew out of a common material and are linked together by a couple of characters common to both, and thematically at least the latter is a sequel to the former, and brings to a climax the philosophy of sexual relationship which is presented in *The Rainbow* through a new technique. *The Rainbow* appeared in 1915 and was suppressed as 'an orgy of sexiness'. 'This suppression, in fact, was the main reason that *Women in Love*, essentially finished in the fall of 1916, took four years to find a publisher". The book was finally published in U.S.A. in November, 1920, and when it appeared in England about six months later (May, 1921) it was greeted with a threat of libel, which necessitated some minor changes to satisfy the British public.

Lawrence called it a destructive book born of the agony and disillusionment arising from the experiences of War and the harrassment to which he was subjected by the police of his country because his wife happened to be a member of German aristocracy, who made no secret about her allegiance to Germany, at war with England. The War came as a sudden and disastrous blow on his heart and soul : "The War finished me", he wrote, "it was a spear through the side of all sorrows and all hopes". It was the result of human madness symptomatic of the decadence of the modern industrial civilization, which he believed, with W.B. Yeats and T.S. Eliot, was on the brink of collapse and it was the duty of poets and prophets to discover the elements of a better and healthier relationship between man and woman, man and man, and man and the larger universe of nature. The problem had occupied the novelists in his earlier works also, but it is in *Women in Love* that he deals with it at greater length and with deeper insight.

ANALYSIS OF THE STRUCTURE OF THE NOVEL

Lawrence's *Women in Love* is the most elaborate statement of his philosophy of sex, presented conceptually as well as dramatically through a double story of love, concerning two sisters, the Brangwen girls, Ursula and Gudrun, educated and intellectual, but of contrasted nature. Their fundamental contrast is brought out in their conversation on marriage with which the novel opens. Gudrun says bitterly 'Nothing materialises ! *Everything withers in the bud.* I get no feeling whatever from the thought of bearing children. But about Ursula we are told that she feels a force within herself, striving to lay hold on life, but frustrated : "*She seemed to try and put her hands out, like an infant in womb*, and she could not, not yet". 'In these two images, the withering bud and the child in the womb, which recur several times in the book, Lawrence suggests the two forces of destruction and creation, whose conflict is sustained throughout. Essentially it is a conflict between contemporary civilization and the attitude it produces in human beings and what Lawrence calls 'the blood' consciousness the dark unconscious life-force which is the root of all life and unites man to woman, man to man, and man to the universe of which he is a part. Ursula and Birkin stand for life or creation, while Gudrun and Gerald, together with Hermione Roddice and Laerka, the artist, represent the force of death and destruction.

After their conversation on marriage the two girls set out for the Crich wedding, passing through the shapeless, barren ugliness' of the mining village, 'an uncreated hostile world', says the novelist. As they stand and watch, the eyes of Gudrun encounter Gerald Crich, the brother of the bride, and she feels a strange fascination and a compelling desire to know the person more intimately. Ursula, on the other hand is interested in Birkin, a school teacher, yet with a curious ambivalence. Prominent among the guests is an important-looking lady, Hermione Roddice, richly dressed, impressive 'yet macabre', intellectual, interested in social reform and in arts. She poses to be invulnerable in the eyes of the world, yet, says the novelist, 'there was always a secret chink in her armour...a lack of robust self......a terribie void' which she is eager to fill with the help of Birkin, who, however, is growing restive and openly hostile to her 'mental' sexuality.

The next important episode sees Gerald Crich and Rupert Birkin immersed in Bohemian life in London, where the themes are sex and art. Then the scene shifts to Hermione's Georgian country house where the four principal characters are invited. A number of other guests are also there, depicted with wonderful vividness and ironical verve. Sir Joshua, for example supposed to be modelled upon Bertrand Russell, the great philosopher, is introduced as 'a learned, dry Baronet of fifty, who was always making witticisms and laughing at them heartily in a harsh horse-laugh'. To Gudrun he appears 'as a flat bottle, containing tabloids of compressed

liberty". The scene, however, ends tragically when Hermione, stung to the quick by the home-thrusts of her erstwhile lover, Birkin, makes a murderous attack on him with a paper weight. The result is that poor Birkin escapes into the countryside for restorative. "Here was his world, he wanted nobody and nothing, but the lovely, subtle reponsive vegetation, and himself, his own living self."

The stage is now set for the two love-stories, Birkin-Ursula and Gerald-Gudrun, to develop. But its current is crossed by the theme of friendship which Birkin is eager to cultivate with Gerald in order to complete his emotional union or marriage with Ursula. In the beginning the attitude of the two men to each other is 'a strange perilous intimacy which was either hate or love or both'. Birkin, however, is anxious to establish 'a blood brothership pact' which may be conducive to their successful relationship with women. But Gerald refuses to enter into such an intimacy with another member of the same sex.

A word must here be said about the way in which the plot develops from this point to the close of the novel. Mark Schorer has perceptively observed that the novel has really no mechanical plot, no story in the conventional sense: it is developed in separate episodes, yet these are meant to form a pattern of psychic relationships', a pattern of psychic movement with a large general rhythm, but without the objective frame of the old novel. The result is that the novel is apparently loose in structure, yet, really it is highly and complexly organized. Its peculiar structure is more akin to the art of dance than to the art of traditional fiction. 'As in dance, it develops through the shifting allegiances between the members, and the configuration of characters in terms of thematic significance is remarkably strict.

Thus Birkin breaks away from Hermione and turns to Ursula, who, however, does not respond to his offer of life and moves towards Hermione. Them follows the scene, 'the Water Party', a death by drowning, which brings together Gerald and Birkin. The next chapter shows Ursula in a despondent mood, yearning towards real death to escape from a living death in society : she now hates Birkin. Birkin now turns to Gerald and proposes to him the 'blood brothership' pact, a complete commitment which the latter declines. This is followed by the crucial chapter—'The Industrial Magnate, which is a graphic picture of Gerald, his father and his mother and of the organization which Gerald builds with scientific efficiency and ruthlessness till he becomes the God of machine. 'It was the first great step in undoing, the first great phase of chaos, the substitution of the mechanical principle for the organic, the destruction of the organic purpose, the organic unity, and the subordination of every organic unit to the great mechanical purpose' This is followed by a contrasted chapter—'Rabbit'—the image of a vital animal life, which Gerald and Gudrun try to tame and subdue

and thereby they are united in an 'obscene rite'. The next chapter—'Moony' brings together, Ursula and Birkin, two despairing souls, prone to destruction which is symbolized by Birkin's effort to destroy the image of moon reflected in water. At the end they do not agree to unite, but drift apart, Birkin towards Gerald and Ursula towards Hermione—in chapters 'Man to Man' and 'Woman to Woman'. Ultimately the Ursula-Birkin climax comes in the chapter—'Excurse' in the achievement of their 'polarity in relationship'.

The other story now develops contrariwise. In 'Death and love' the death of Gerald's father drives him to Gudrun, by way of the graveyard; he brings the clay of his father's new grave into her bedroom. Their love is thus equated with death. In the final scene the four go abroad, where Gudrun drifts towards Loerka and pits her will against that of Gerald, which ends in the latter's death on the snow-clad plain. Gudrun and Loerka, both symbols of destruction depart to sink into further disintegration. Ursula and Birkin remain united, yet Birkin is left melancholy at the thought of his failure to establish a bond of Union with Gerald. Thus the novel does not end in a conventional way. It has on open structure. We are now in a position to examine the love-stories more closely.

In the first we have one male and two females, Ursula, Birkin and Hermione Roddice ; while in the second story there is one female and two males, Gudrun, Gerald and Loerke. At first the story of Ursula is taken up. She feels attracted towards a local inspector of schools named Birkin, a sensitive young man of weak health, but of great drive, who is the preacher of Lawrence's sexual mysticism. He has attracted the notice of Hermione Roddice, a cultured lady of high status, great fortune and fervent zeal for public work. But she feels that there is a terrible gap or void within her which can be filled only by a genuine love which Birkin can bless her with. But Birkin has nothing but contempt for that intellectual lady who is the embodiment of pure intellectualism. He tells her in her very face that she is the moon with one half only in her possession, the other half being dead and gone. Knowledge is every thing to her and she has no spontaneous flow. She is a leaf on the whithered tree of knowledge, and even animalism is in her head She wants to watch her own animal functions for mental thrill which is the worst and the last form of intellectualism. She has will and understanding, but lacks the dark sensual body, where love generally germinates.

But his soul turns spontaneously towards Ursula, who offers him the best promise of fulfilment in love. Unfortunately his conception of love is so uncommon and so unexpected that Ursula is not able to understand what he actually means by offering love to her. Birkin begins to preach his new cult of love in which the parties are free from the control of each other, each remaining single and their love or union being a conjunction of two stars.

Birkin tells her that love is not greater than the individuality of the lover, and there is no fusion or merger, or the melting of the one into the other, so that the two individuals may become a single entity. Ursula on the other hand stands for the conventional idea of love which means complete surrender of the soul and body to the domination of love, loyalty and constancy on the part of the lover, and complete obedience and subjection on the part of the beloved. When Birkin begins to talk in mystic terms she cannot rise up to his level, and she has to spend days and nights under torturing despair and blankness of mind. But she cannot resist the magic of Birkin's personality and the lovers therefore meet and talk again of the same subject. Birkin again begins to preach that he is opposed to the conventional marriage, the hot narrow intimacy between man and wife who shut themselves in their exclusive alliance. He also hated promiscuity as worse than marriage, hated also the ordinary sex, which was a limitation and turned man and woman into broken halves. It was only a functional process not a fulfilment. But beyond this sexual union there was a further conjunction, the union of two pure beings balancing each other like two poles of one force. As he warms up, he begins to tell her that he would be "like an Egyptian, steadfast in perfectly suspended equilibrium, a pure mystic, nodality of physical being they would give each other."

But Ursula was not able to resist the magic of his personality for a long time. She felt drawn towards him but not without alternations in her mood. At one time she was overwhelmed with a bitter hatred, mystical and unaccountable towards him, at another she felt as if she had become completely empty of the life energy and was gradually sinking towards death. The movement towards death exhilarated her, because death was the one state beyond the control of man and beyond also the reach of his corrupting influence. There followed an interval of time in which they were separated on account of the illness of Birkin. But the love experience was resumed after his return, when Ursula rose above her apathy to meet and talk to him again. She tells him very frankly that it is his zeal of a preacher which does not appeal to her and if he wants a real understanding and real union with her he should be more reserved and sober. Birkin again begins to discuss the old philosophy by saying that 'there is a real impersonal *me* that is beyond love, beyond any emotional relationship, so that the love between man and woman is not meeting and mingling, but a pure balance of two single beings. Adam kept Eve in the indestructible paradise, when he kept her single with himself like a star in its orbit. This pure union is irrevocable, and it is freedom in togetherness, in which the parties are united, yet each remains single and unique. Birkin has decribed this condition as follows :

> "There was the paradisal entry into pure, single being, the individual soul taking precedence over love and desire for union, stronger than any pangs of emotion, a lovely state of

pure proud singleness, with others, and with the other, submits to the yoke and leash of love, but never forfeits its own proud individual singleness, even while it loves and yields".

Birkin and Ursula attained to this state gradually and in stages, which are marked by the following quotations arranged serially :

(*a*) She clung nearer to him. He held her clothes. It was such peace and heavenly freedom, just to fold her and kiss her gently, and not to have any thoughts or any desire or any will, just to be still with her, to be perfectly still and together, in a peace that cannot sleep, but content in bliss. This was heaven, to be together in happy stillness.

(*b*) She looked at him. New eyes were opened in her soul. She saw a strange creature from another world. She had discovered something, something more than wonderful, more wonderful than life itself. It was a strange mystery of his life-motion, at the back of the thighs down the flanks. It was a strange reality of his being, the very stuff of being, there in the straight downflow of the thighs. It was here she discovered him one of the sons of God, such as were in the beginning of the world. This was released at last. She had her lovers, she had known passion but this was neither love nor passion. It was the daughters of men coming back to the sons of God, the strange inhuman sons of God who are in the beginning. She had established a rich new circuit, a new current of passional electric energy, between the two of thêm, release from the darkest poles of the body, flooded them both with rich peace and satisfaction.

(*c*) He stood before her glimmering, in his strange, whole body, that had its marvellous fountains, fountains more mysterious and potent than any she had imagined or known, more satisfying, mystically-physically satisfying. She had thought there was no source deeper than the phallic source, And now, behold, from the smitten rock of the man's body from the strange marvellous flanks and thighs, deeper, further in mystery than the phallic source, came the floods of ineffable darkness and ineffable riches.

(*d*) She had her desire of him, she touched, she received the maximum of unspeakable communication of touch, dark, subtle, positively silent. She had her desire fulfilled. He had his desire fulfilled. For she was to him what he was to her, the immemorial magnificence of mystic, palpable, real otherness".

This fulfilment comes to Ursula as her new birth, in which the past is obliterated and all the wordly connections have disappeared, and Birkin has become the centre of her universe and her felicity. For Birkin, however, this fulfilment though extremely satisfying does not mean the end of relationship. He wants to establish a similar relationship with a man, and he selects Gerald as an object of pure union and friendship. But Gerald does not respond, and this failure

remains as a thorn in the flesh of Birkin, which causes a shooting pain as he stands before the dead body of the industrialmagnate, who has no chance of survival in the heart that may have loved him.

This story of fulfilment in love is contrasted with the love story of Gudrun and Gerald. Gudrun tells him towards the close of that novel that her love for him was born out of pity arising from his forelorn condition after the death of his father. But the bond which united them was fatal and mysterious, and was realised by Gudrun herself in her first meeting with Gerald, "In his clear northern flesh and his fair hair was a glisten like sun-shine refracted through crystals of ice. His gleaming beauty, maleness, like a young, good-humoured smiling wolf, did not blind her to the significant, sinister stillness in his bearing, the lurking danger of his unsubdued temper. A strange transport took possession of her, all her veins were in a paroxysm of violent sensation. 'Good God ?' she exclaimed to herself, 'what is this ?' and then, a moment after she was saying assuredly, 'I shall know more of that man'. She was tortured with desire to see him again, a nostalgia, a necessity to see him again, to make sure it was not all a mistake, that she was not deluding herself'. Strangely enough Gerald himself makes the same discovery :

> "Gerald watched Gudrun closely. There was a body of cold power in her. He saw her a dangerous, hostile spirit that could stand undiminished and unabated. The bond was established between them ; they were of the same kind, he and she, a sort of diabolic free masonry subsisted between them. Hence forward, she knew she had her power over him. Wherever they met, they would be secretly associated, and he would be helpless in the association with her. Her soul exulted".

There are many points of similarity between the two apart from the fact that they are possessed of strong willpower, which does not easily yield to anything Like Gudrun Gerald also is a creature of the North, the great lover of snow and rock. Birkin describes him as the strange white, wonderful demon from the North, fulfilled in the destructive frost mystery. As they walk together through the snow-clad rocks they both are filled with a new energy and vitality. The exaltation of Gudrun we have already described but we quote here the few lines which describe the condition of Gerald, "He felt strong as winter, his hands were living metal, invincible and not to be turned aside. He felt strong enough to leap over all the barrier and the limits and come back again".

Secondly, they are both opposed to marriage and the responsibility which marriage involves. But they are bound by physical attraction which is very exciting so long as it lasts. This passion rises from their hearts like a stream of hot lava and dazzles and blinds them as long as it lasts. This point has been very clearly stated in the following, moving and poetical passage :

"And they both felt the subterranean desire to let go, to fling away everything and lapse into a sheer unrestraint brutal and licentious. A strange black passion surged up pure in Gudrun. She felt strong. She felt her hands so strong, as if she could tear the world as under with them. She remembered the abandonments of Roman licence, and her heart grew hot. She wanted it with him, this unacknowledged franzy. For a moment the clear perfection of this preoccupied her, distinct and perfect in its final reality".

Gerald is described as a man of strong and beautiful body and it is the maleness in him which exercises great fascination upon women he comes in contact with. As an industrial magnate he has displayed remarkable willpower to subdue matter and convert thousands of workers into mere instruments. But this process of rationalisation has left his heart empty and dry and he needs strong stimulus, or rather stimulants to bring back the current of life through his frozen veins. But though he realises that union with women can provide maximum relief to him he looks at them in the light of his victims, creatures to be crushed and subdued by the weight of his body. This is why though he himself derives life and satisfaction from intercourse with Gudrun and other women, he is never able to provide peace and satisfaction to them. Gudrun, of course, is attracted by his strong male body :

"And her breast was keen with passion for him, he was so beautiful in his male stillness and mystery. It was a certain pure effluence of maleness, like an aroma from his softly, firmly-moulded contours, a certain rich perfection of his presence that touched her with an ecstasy, a thrill of pure intoxication".

Gerald, on the other hand, pursues her even when she rebuffs him, because he realises that she is his source of life, and he cannot live without her. This idea has been embodied in the passage which describes the effect of his first intercourse with her :

"As he drew nearer to her, he plunged deeper into her enveloping soft warmth, a wonderful creative heat that penetrated his veins and gave him life again. All his veins that were murdered and lacerated, healed softly as life came pulsing in, stealing invisibly into him as if it were the all-powerful effluence of the sun".

There is also before her a happy vision of domestic life with such a prosperous man who may become the Napoleon of peace, or Bismarck. But this dream does not last long because by nature she is not attracted by the glamour of wealth and material prosperity. The magic of Gerald's body also fades before long and she suddenly realises his vanity, his conceit, and his desire to conquer and subdue all the women who came in contact with him :

"The deep resolve formed in her, to combat him. One of them must triumph over the other. Her soul steeled itself with strength. It woke a certain keen, half contemptuous pity, tenderness for him, she was so ruthless".

To add to the anger and worry of Gerald she turned her mind towards the poor artist Loerke, who wanted only intellectual fellowship. Describing the difference between Gerald and Loerke the novelist has stated that Gerald represented the familiar world to Gudrun, who became tired of it and like Alexander the Great she wanted to discover and conquer a new world. She felt with horror as if he tore at the bud of her heart, tore it open, like an irreverent persistent being. Gerald was never able to touch the depth of herself, "but the poor artist with his insect=like penetration could reach the inner darkness and find the spirit of the woman in its inner recess, and wrestle with it there, the central serpent that is coiled at the core of life".

At last this love is turned into hate and Gudrun and Gerald are eager to destroy each other. The result is the death of Gerald on the snowy ground, and the final union (not marriage) of Gudrun with corrupt Loerke for the enjoyment of subtler, if deadlier and unhealthier, sensations.

3

The Main Themes of the Novel

THEME OF LOVE

THE novel is primarily concerned with the elaboration of Lawrence's philosophy of love, which is here expounded by Birkin, a mouth piece of the novelist himself. The basis of this philosophy is the axiom that each individual self is unique, and it is our sacred duty that this uniqueness, separateness and freedom should be maintained at all costs. But the unique individual finds development or self-fulfilment in relationship with other individual, man and woman, and with the external universe itself. Among these relationships the most primary and basic is the relationship between man and woman, which culminates in their marriage. The starting point of this relationship is sexual union because in perfect relationship the whole man and the whole woman are involved, in body and in soul. As sex is basic to this relationship it is not wise to regard it as something dirty or nasty. As a matter of fact it is a sacred life-flow, a glow or flicker which alone makes life worth living. This living sex is a dynamic call, which the hearts of men and women must respond to suddenly and spontaneously. The sex itself is only a means to an end. It must lead to that depth in which the parties must touch the 'quick' of each other, the coiled serpent which is seated in the centre of life. Mark the following description of the union between Birkin and Ursula : 'She closed her hands over the full, rounded body of his loins, as he stooped over her, she seemed to touch the quick of the mystery of darkness that was bodily him. She seemed to faint beneath, and he seemed to faint, stooping over her. It was a perfect passing away for both of them, and at the same time the most intolerable accession into being, the marvellous fullness of immediate gratification, overwhelming, overflooding from the source of the deepest life-force, the darkest, deepest strangest life-force of the human body, at the back and base of the loins.

The philosophy of love expounded by Birkin is negatively opposed to the woman's natural instinct to possess man, to the idea of the merging of two persons into one and to the conventional sentiment about marriage and domesticity. We may cite the following observations in support of this statement :

(*a*) Birkin reflects about Hermione : "Hermione, the humble, the subservient, what was she all the while but the Mater Dolorosa claiming with horrible, insidious arrogance and female tyranny her own again, claiming back the man she had borne in suffering. By her very suffering and humility she bound her son with chains, she held him her everlasting prisoner......Hermione saw herself as the perfect idea, to which all men must come: and Ursula was the perfect Womb, the bath of birth, to which all men must come !

And both were horrible'.

Curiously enough this very image is used in the description of the sexual union of Gerald and Gudrun :

> "Into her he poured all his pent-up darkness and corrosive death, and he was whole again......She was the great bath of life......mother and substance and all life was she. And he, child and man, received of her and was made whole".

(*b*) Secondly, he asserts : "This horrible fusion of two beings which every woman and most men insisted on, was it not nauseous and horrible ?

(*c*) Birkin tells Ursula that he does not want her good looks, her womanly feelings and the hot narrow intimacy between man and wife, "The thought of love, marriage and children, and a life together, in the horrible privacy of domestic and connubial satisfaction, was repulsive". Poor Ursula is naturally puzzled and Birkin is obliged to explain the peculiar relationship contemplated by him several times and with the help of different symbols and images : In Chapter XVI as he lies in his sick bed he probes into the mystery of this relationship, as follows :

> "Man must be added on to a woman before he had any real peace or wholeness. And why ? Why should we consider ourselves, men and women, as broken fragments of one whole ? It is not true. Rather we are the singling away into purity and clear being of things that were mixed. Rather the sex is that which remains in us of the mixed, the unresolved. And passion is the further separating of this mixture, that which is manly being taken into the being of man, that which is womanly passing to the woman till the two are whole and clear as angels, the admixture of sex in the highest sense surpassed, leaving two single beings constellated together like two stars. Pure man and pure woman perfectly polarised ; the pure duality of polarisation, each one free from any contamination of the other, the man has his pure freedom, the woman hers. Each recognizes the perfection of the polarised sex-circuit. Each admits the different nature in the other".

Ursula believed that love far surpassed the individual, but Birkin told her that the individual was more than love, or than any relationship :

"The individual soul taking precedence over love and desire for union, stronger than any pangs of emotion, a lovely state of free, proved existence, which accepted the obligation of the permanent connection with the others, and with the other, submits to the yoke and leash of love, but never forfeits its own proud individual singless, even while it loves and yields".

Before reaching this state the lovers must plunge into the sexual union to be reborn: in the words of the novelist himself: "And now behold, from the smitten rock of the man's body, from the strange, marvellous flanks and thighs came the floods of ineffable darkness and ineffable riches". They are reborn and cut themselves off from their old moorings, confident that they are to give each other this star-equilibrium which alone is freedom. Yet the novel closes on a note of regret that Birkin was not able to establish a true permanent union with Gerald, without which love between man and woman remains imperfect.

THE THEME OF FRIENDSHIP

The primary theme of *Women in Love* is the relationship between man and woman, but one of its important secondary themes is the true relation between man and man, which in common parlance is known as friendship. Friendship, of course, is one of the oldest themes in literature ; it figures prominently in Plato, and the sonnets as well as many of the romantic comedies of Shakespeare centre round love and friendship. In Lawrence it appears in stories and in his important novels as a part of the 'blood' relationship which completes and perfects love and marriage and contributes to the spontaneous and harmonious life of man. In the present novel, Birkin, the apostle of Lawrentian, love is anxious to establish this 'blood' relationship with Gerald, the industrial magnate and emotionally immature man, whose intransigence and destructive impulse prevents its materialisation. In the beginning they are described as men who 'had not the faintest belief in deep relationship between men and men, and their disbelief prevented any development of their powerful but suppressed friendliness. The initial relationship between them was 'a strange, perilous intimacy which was either hate or love, or both'.

In the second chapter of the novel they break into a violent quarrel and the two men part 'each man suppressing his strange burning attraction towards the other.' But in the scene, dealing with the drowning of Gerald's sister, Birkin plays a role which touches the heart of Gerald, who exclaims : 'you mean a lot to me, Rupert more than you know.' This paves the way for the next encounter in which Birkin proposes something like the 'blood' pact of the German Knights : 'make a little wound in their arms, and rub each

other's blood into the cut, and swear to be true to each other, of one blood all their lives'. In their case 'the wound' is not necessary but they can 'swear to love each other 'you and I, implicitly, and perfectly, finally, without any possibility of going back on it.' Gerald is interested, but puzzled and wants time to think over it. Birkin explains the nature of the relationship proposed by him in precise terms : 'No sloppy emotionalism. An impersonal union that leaves one free'. After an interval of time, during which both the men have undergone a psychological crisis which has left them bored, they enact a wrestling scene, conducive to an intense physical intimacy, which Lawrence has described in his most characteristic language. We quote only the most relevant sentences :

> "So the men entwined and wrestled with each other, working nearer and nearer .....Gerald flushed smart red where he was touched, and Birkin remained white and tense. He seemed to penetrate into Gerald's more solid, more diffuse bulk, to interfuse his body through the body of the other, as if to bring it subtly into subjection. It was as if Birkin's whole physical intelligence interpenetrated into Gerald's body, as if his fine sublimated energy entered into his flesh of the fuller man, like some potency, casting a fine net, a prison, through the muscles into the very depths of Gerald's physical being—the physical junction of two bodies'. As they fall back exhausted 'Gerald's hand closed warm and sudden over Birkin's, they remained exhausted and breathless, one hand clasped closely over the other'. As they return to normal consciousness Birkin says to Gerald : 'We are mentally, spiritually intimate, therefore we should be, more or less physically intimate, too—it is more whole. I think also that you are beautiful......and that is enjoyable too".

The critics have interpreted this 'physical intimacy' as homosexuality, and the overtone of the passage apparently supports this view. Yet, Lawrence himself was of a different mind. In his *Fantansia of the Unconscious* there is a significant discussion on this subject :

> "Is this new polarity, this new circuit of passion between comrades and co-workers, is this also sexual ? It is not. Because what are the poles of positive connection ?—the upper, busy poles. What is the dynamic contact ?—a unison of spirit, in understanding, and a great commingling in work. A mingling of the individual passion into one great purpose. Knowing what sex is, can we call this other also sex ? We cannot......It is a great motion in the opposite direction".

His letters also have many references to this practice, which he calls abominable : "I like men to be beasts but insects—one insect mounted on other—oh God ! The soldiers at Worthing are like that—they remind one of lice or bugs', Again, "These

horrible little frowsy people, men lovers of men, they give me such a sense of corruption, almost putrescence, that I dream of beetles :

Mark Spilka, therefore, is right in his interpretation of this physical intimacy between man and man, as based on the Laurentian concepts of 'touch' and 'warmth' in human relationship. In *Lady Chatterley's Lover* Mellors says, 'I stand for the touch of bodily awareness between human beings......and the touch of tenderness as for sex, it is only 'the closest of all touch'. Gerald, however, is not prepared for such an intimacy, because he is a symbol of mechanical principle which is not only destructive, but also self-destructive. Gerald ultimately dies an icy death, and Birkin turns to Ursula in blank despair : "Having you, I can live all my life without any body else, any other sheer intimacy. But to make it complete, really happy, I wanted eternal union with a man too ; another kind of love". Ursula calls it 'false' and 'impossible', but this does not shake the belief of Birkin that such an intimacy must have been healing and wholesome for Gerald : 'If he pledged himself with the man he would later be able to pledge himself with a woman : not merely in legal marriage, but in absolute mystic marriage 'or star-equilibrium'.

CRITICISM OF INDUSTRIAL SYSTEM

Lawrence was a prophet of the 'blood' consciousness and of free spontaneous life of individuals alone or in relationship with other individuals. He was naturally opposed to the entire scientific process of industrialisation which has replaced the principle of life and vitality by the lifeless machine and soulless abstraction, destructive of beauty, dignity and humanity of the employers and his workers alike. Bitter criticism of the industrial system is, therefore, a recurrent theme in his novels, but it is in the *Women in Love* that it becomes most searching and comprehensive, because it is a part of a radical indictment of the modern civilization itself, which, like those in the past, appeared to be entering upon its stage of decadence, before sinking into the abyss.

In the chapter, titled 'The Industrial Magnate' the diagnosis of the psychological effects of the system has been presented at length, though' the amorphous ugliness' of the small colliery town has been touched upon in the very opening chapter. Before Gerald takes over the management of the coal industry, it has been under the control of his father who was trapped in between two half-truths, his Christian love and charity towards his workers who were, to him, the image of God at whose feet he desired to sacrifice his all ; and his real interest in material benefit accruing to himself through the production of coal. The result was that his philanthropy assumed the form of hypocrisy, not only in the eyes of his

workers, but also in the eyes of his wife 'who had opposed him like one of the great demons of hell' by hammering the point repeatedly that his very existence was dependent on the miseries of his people and he was some subtle funeral bird feeding upon their miseries. The sentimental regime of the old man came to an end and his son enthroned himself on the saddle. He was enamoured of the concept of harmony and sought to introduce it into his industrial concern, little thinking that he was applying a purely religious and spiritual concept to affairs secular and material. His watch words wore efficiency, order and rationalisation. He was inspired by an inflexible determination to subjugate the matter to his will and reduce the chaos to order. "He had all his life been tortured by a ferocious and destructive demon, which possessed him sometimes like an insanity. This tempter now entered like a virus into the firm and there were cruel erruptions". There was no room for sentiment or mercy in his scientific management ; the workers ceased to be human beings and became instruments of production ; joy went out of their lives and hope perished as they were mechanised : "There was a new world, a new order, strict, terrible, inhuman, but satisfying in its very destructiveness. The men were satisfied to belong to the great wonderful machine, even whilst it destroyed them......This was a sort of freedom they really wanted. It was the first great step in undoing, the first great phase of chaos, the substitution of the mechanical principle for the organic, the destruction of the organic purpose, the organic unity and the subordination of every organic unit to the great mechanical purpose. It was pure organic disintegration and pure mechanical organization. This is the first and finest state of chaos". The mind behind this mechanical organization, the mind of Gerald, is vividly presented in the episode where he is ruthlessly engaged in controlling the restive Arab mare by piercing her soft flesh with his sharp spurs, which terrifies Gudrun with a sense of overpowering maleness. At a later stage she is struck with his native ferocity :

> "His gleaming beauty, maleness, like a young, good-humoured, smiling wolf, did not blind her to the significant, sinister stillness in his bearing, the lurking danger of his unsubdued temper."

The industrial magnate, in fact, is a flower of dissolution, in as much as his iron exterior contains a heart in the process of disintegration, an inner emptiness. "His mind was active. But it was like a bubble floating in the darkness. It was as if his centres of feelings were drying up. He remained calm, calculative and healthy even while he felt, with a faint, small but final sterile horror, that his mystic reason was breaking, giving way now, at this crisis."

He goes to Gudrun for sexual satisfaction to heal up his wounded heart, like a child seeking nourishment at the breast of the mother : The latter has a momentary dream of happiness with this man, but very soon it fades away, yielding place to an attitude of

bitter cynicism : "Young as she was, Gudrun had touched the whole pulse of social England. She had no idea of rising in the world. She knew, with the perfect cynicism of cruel youth, that to rise in the world meant to have one outside show instead of another, the advance was like having a spurious half-crown instead of a spurious penny. The whole coinage of valuation was spurious." She pours her revulsion in her meditation upon the nature of the industrial magnate :

> "Oh God, when I think of Gerald, and his work—those offices at Beldover, and the mines—it makes my heart sick. What have I to do with it—and him thinking he can be a lover to a woman ? One may as well ask it of a self-satisfied lamp-post. These men with their eternal jobs, and their eternal mills of God that keep on grinding at nothing ? It is too boring, just boring. However did I come to take him seriously at all".

The malady of Gerald is the malady of modern civilization, the hypertrophy of mind and atrophy of heart which Lawrence has diagnosed in his psychological essays. F. R. Leavis has quoted the following passage from *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* which is quite pertinent to our purpose :

> "True, we must all develop into mental consciousness. But mental consciousness is not a goal ; it is a cul-de-sac. It provides us only with endless *appliances* which we can use for the all-too-difficult business of coming to our spontaneous-creative fullness of being It provides us with means to adjust ourselves with the external universe. It gives us further means for subduing the external materio-mechanical universe to our great end of creative life. And it gives us plain indications of how to avoid falling into automatism, hints for the applying of the will, the loosening of false, automatic fixations, the brave adherence to a profound soul-impulse. This is the use of the mind—a great indicator and instrument. *The mind as author and director of life is anathema.* It is a great dynamo of supermechanical force. Given the will as accomplice, it can even arrogate itself machine-motions and automatizations over the whole life, till every tree becomes a clipped tea-pot, and every man a useful mechanism. So we see the brain, like a great dynamo and accumulator, accumulating mechanical force and presuming to apply this mechanical force control to the living unconscious, subjecting everything spontaneous to certain machine principles called ideals and ideas. And human will assists in this humiliating and sterilizing process".

To Birkin Gerald is a symptom and symbol of a decadent civilization sloping towards death :

> "Birkin thought of Gerald. He was one of those strange, white wonderful demons from the north fulfilled in the destructive frost mystery. And was he fated to pass away in this knowledge

this one process of frost—knowledge, death by perfect cold? Was he a messenger, an omen of the universal dissolution into whiteness and snow?"

This is how Lawrence himself thought of the modern civilization after the outbreak of the World War, 1914-18.

THE MOST DESTRUCTIVE NOVEL

Lawrence himself described *Women in Love* as his most destructive novel, and a careful study of the work will fully support his point of view. It contains the bitterest indictment of modern civilization, which had been the target of his attack in practically all the works that had preceded it, while the novels that followed did, in no way, modify his basic assumption that our scientific and industrial civilization was diseased and decadent. Lawrence, like W. B. Yeats, author of the powerful 'Second coming' looked upon the war as the most explosive symptom of its approaching dissolution, because destructiveness, of the scale let loose by this war, was the surest manifestation of its death pang :

> The blood-dimmed tide is loosed
> And the ceremony of innocence is drawned,

The novel contains a long discussion on the African art which is symptomatic of its decadence and the discussion is quite significant in as much as it throws a flood of light on the psychological state of modern humanity which is a pointer to the state of the civilization which is at once its cause and its effect. Birkin, who spells out Lawrence's revolt against modern civilization, makes the following generalisation about civilizations known to human history :

"It must have been thousands of years since her race died, mystically ; that is, since the relation between the senses and the outspoken mind had broken, leaving the experience all in one sort, mystically sensual......the goodness, the holiness, the desire for creation and productive happiness must have lapsed, leaving the single impulse of knowledge in one sort, mindless progressive knowledge through the senses, knowledge arrested and ending in the senses, mystic knowledge in disintegration and dissolution, knowledge such as the beetles have, which live purely in the world of corruption and cold dissolution". The meaning is that health, individual and social alike, depends upon wholeness, upon the harmony of mind and the senses ; but when head and heart fall asunder the symptoms of death become manifest. The idea is put by W.B. Yeats in the well-known words :

> Turning and turning in the widening gyra
> The Falcon cannot bear the falconer.

Falcon is the mind which has gone beyond control and the consequence of this rupture is that 'things fall apart ; the centre cannot hold ; and utter anarchy is loosed upon its world'. In the case of the modern civilization a process, reverse of what happened in the case of the old African civilization, has taken place. It is marked by the supremacy of the mind and its motto is 'knowledge is power', and this power is displayed in subduing the external objects and persons to its own will. The alliance between knowledge and will is destructive, as Lawrence himself puts it ; 'the mind is a great dynamo of super-mechanical force. Given the will as accomplice, it presumes to apply this mechanical force-control to the living unconscious, subjecting everything spontaneous to certain machine principles called ideals or ideas'. Birkin has witnessed this phenomenon around him and is convinced that the modern civilization has become dead at heart and has now entered upon the phase of decadence, a prolonged process of disintegration before total extinction. He says to himself : "There is a long way we can travel, after the death-break ; after that point when the soul in intense suffering breaks, breaks away from its organic hold like a leaf that falls. We fall from the connection with life and hope, we lapse from the pure integral being, from creation and liberty, and we fall into the long, long African process......of dissolution'. 'But', Birkin adds, it will be done differently by the white races. 'The white races, having the arctic north behind them, the vast abstraction of ice and snow, would fulfil a mystery of ice-destructive knowledge, snow abstract annihilation'.

We have now to examine how these ideas are concretely presented in the novel. In this respect we have to bear in mind that the grouping of characters in the novel is govered by two contrasted principles, the principle of life and creation, and the principle of death—in life and destruction. The relation between Birkin and Ursula symbolises, love, life and harmony based on mutual respect for each other's individuality. This is contrasted with three relationships—Birkin-Hermione, Gudrun-Gerald and Gudrun-Loerke.

The novel opens with the description of Hermione, an intellectual and enlightened lady of great willpower who is occasionally conscious of an inner void, which she seeks to fill by establishing sexual relationship with Birkin. The character of Hermione is built by means of a series of remarks—such as Birkin's, 'you are merely making words, knowledge means everything to you. Even your animalism, you want in your head'. Her own remark, "If only we could learn to use our will we could do anything. I was a very queer and nervous girl. And by learning to use my will, simply by using my will, I made myself right'. To this Birkin replies : 'It is fatal to use the will like that, disgusting, such a will is an obscenity'. This imperious will is combined with her intellectuality—'Her long, pale face, that she carried lifted up...... seemed almost drugged, as if a strange mass of thoughts coiled in the darkness within, and she was never allowed to escape'. She is,

in short, a possessive woman, a Mater Dolorora, whose apparent subservience is, in fact, an insidious arrogance and female tyranny, 'claiming back the man she had borne in suffering'.

Birkin is always knocking at the fortress of her will, but not without a shudder at the thought of the consequences ; 'he would never, never dare to break her will, and let loose the maelstrom of her unconsciousness, and see her in her ultimate madness'. And this madness, this frenzy of destructiveness finally breaks out when she realizes her failure to subdue Birkin to her will : "A terrible voluptuous thrill ran down her arms......Her arms quivered and were strong, immeasurably and irresistitily strong. What delight in strength, what delirium of pleasure......Then swiftly in a flame that drenched down her body like fluid lightning and gave her a perfect, unutterable consummation, unutterable satisfaction, she brought down the ball of jewel stone with all her force, crash on his head'.

In the case of Gerald we have a combination of knowledge-power and will, applied on a larger scale and working wider devastation. He has created a mechanical order which has transformed human beings of flesh and blood into impersonal instruments of productivity. His creativity is not fruitful, but demonic ; because it creates a horrible hell for his men as Gudrun tells Ursula about the underworld of the colliery. "It is like a country in an underworld......The people are all ghouls, and everything is ghostly. Everything is a ghoulish replica of the real world, a replica, a ghoul. all soiled, everything sordid. It's like being mad'. Gerald, thus, is a symbol of resolute will-power which subdues not only the external matter, but also the living creatures as is evident from the description of his ruthless and inhuman determination to control the Arab mare. He shows the same attitude in his relation with woman and this is why the sight of Gerald controlling the mare sends such a thrill of fear through Gudrun's frame. She is fascinated by his maleness, but very soon she perceives his wolvish temper also.

But she herself is endowed with an equally strong willpower and there is a fundamental kinship between them which they recognize as they struggle to catch and subdue the 'rabbit :

"He saw her eyes black as night in her pallid face, she looked almost unearthly......He looked at her and the whitish, electric gleam in his face intensified, . There was a league between them, abhorrent to them both. They were implicated with each other in abhorrent mysteries". But it is a destructtive union : Gudrun exults to think that the 'smiling wolf' was a lamb to her under the pressure of his sexual needs, and Gerald himself is secretly determined to break the strong-willed woman, so necessary to his peace. 'Gerald watched Gudrun closely. These was a body of cold power in her. He saw her a dangerous, hostile spirit that could stand undiminished and unabated.' Gudrun is equally determined : "The deep resolve formed in her, to combat him. One of them must

triumph over the other. Her soul steeled herself with strength. It woke a certain keen, half contemptuous pity, tenderness for him, she was so ruthless". Gudrun here becomes her namesake in the Norse mythology : she is a creature of the north like Gerald himself and both feel a new wave of warmth and energy flowing through them from the cold icy region which is the arena of their final tussle to death. Gerald in his intense hatred becomes blind like Hermione and resolves to destroy the woman he cannot subdue : "A blinding flash went over his brain, his body jolted. His heart had burst into flame. His consciousness had gone into his wrists, into his hand. He was one blind continent desire to kill her. His wrists were bursting ; there would be no satisfaction till his hands had closed on her." The fury, however, proved self-destructive He himself is choked by the cold wind, leaving Gudrun free to enjoy the thrill of new sensation with Loerke.

Loerka 'is a small, strange underworld creature' ; Gudrun, whom he attracts, 'could see in his brown, gnome's eyes the blank look of inorganic misery'. The name of Gudrun, as critics have pointed out, brings in the association of the Norse mythology and Loerke, in terms of this interpretation, becomes the Evil one, the Devil himself who gnaws at the root of the Tree of Life. "He lives like a rat, in the river of corruption, just where it falls over the bottomless pit—the wizard rat that swims ahead in the sewers'.

Gudrun is first attracted to him as to Gerald by her masochistic impulse—the impulse to be overpowered and crushed by a more resolute and powerful partner. At sight of Gerald on the mare, piercing her soft sides with his sharp nails, she felt the sense of fear and shame, which is a handsome anticipation of the feeling which Loerke evokes in her by describing how he subdued a girl by slapping her hard—"Gudrun went pale and a darkness came over her eyes, like shame, she looked up with a certain supplication, *almost slave-like*. Moreover, Loerke also is a worshipper of machine, and his art is an abstraction, quite isolated from real life, as is clear from his conversation with Ursula, who returns a spirited rejoinder to it. Yet Gudrun was repelled by the violent destructiveness of Gerald—'as if he tore at the bud of her heart, tore it open, like an irreverent, persistent being' ; 'but the poor artist with his insect-like penetration could reach the inner darkness and find the spirit of the woman in its inner recess, and wrestle with it there, the central serpent that is coiled at the core of life."

There is a hint of something sinister and perverted in this relationship—as is clear from its description in the novel : "Was it sheer blind force of passion that would satisfy her now ? Not this, but the subtle thrills of extreme sensation in reduction. It was......the last subtle activities of......breaking down, carried out in the darkness of her".

Again : "The world was finished now, for her. There was

only the inner individual darkness..... the obscene religious mystery of ultimate reduction, the mystic frictional activities of diabolic reducing down, disintegrating the vital organic body of life. She had......a further, slow exquisite experience to reap, unthinkable subtleties of sensation to know, before she was finished'.

Obviously the suggestion here points to sexual perversion which is the marked symptom of a decadent civilization, as is emphasised by T.S. Eliot in 'The Fire Sermon', the third movement in his *Waste Land* and described by Birkin in his interpretation of the peculiar art of the decadent African civilization :

> "He realised now that this is a long process—thousands of years it takes, after the death of the creative spirit. He realised that there were great mysteries to be unsealed, *sensual, mindless,dreadful mysteries, far beyond the phallic cult.* How far, in their inverted culture, had these West Africans *gone beyond phallic knowledge* ? Birkin recalled again *the female figure* ; the elongated, long, long body, *the curious unexpected heavy buttocks*......the face with tiny features *like a beetle's.* This was far beyond *phallic knowledge.*"

The portions underlined clearly point to the unnatural coupling between man and man (homosexuality) and perverted relationship between man and woman which G.H. Ford has described 'exploitation of the anal and excremental areas' (anal intercourse has long been practised as a mode of avoiding conception).' Its unhealthiness and steritity is underlined by Lawrence in a passage, quoted below from his essay, 'Pornography and Obscenity' :

> "The sex functions and the excrementory functions in human body work so close together, yet they are, so to speak, utterly different in direction. Sex is a creative flow, the excrementory flow is towards dissolution, *de-creation.* In the real healthy human being the distinction between the two is instant, our profoundest instincts are perhaps our instincts of opposition between the two flows. *But in the degraded human being the deep instincts have gone dead, and then the two flows became identical......It happens when the psyche deteriorates, and the profound controlling instincts collapse*".

Sexual perversion as a habit is clearly contrasted with the innocent curiosity of man or woman to explore all the possibilities of 'blood' relationship. In the 'ski-resort' Ursula reflects as she is going to sleep : "They might do as they liked......How could any thing that gave one satisfaction be excluded ? What was degrading ? ......*Why, not be bestial, and go to the whole round of experience*". Clear still is the passage which decribes her discovery 'of the source of deepest life-force' in Birkin's body :

> "She had thought there was no *source deeper than the phallic source.* And now, behold, from the smitten rock of the man's body, from the strange marvellous flanks and thighs, deeper, further in mystery than the phallic source, came the floods of ineffable darkness and ineffable riches".

This momentary experience in the case of Ursula is described as 'an act of purification', yet confusion is bound to arise from this implication of Ursula and Birkin also in an experience deeper than 'the phallic knowledge'. But they at least succeed in uniting themselves in an ideal marriage beyond the taint of decadence in their dying civilization which Birkin hates from the bottom of his heart. He is heart-sick with the tainted human race, regards it as an ugly blot on the fair face of Nature and wishes that it should be effaced by God to make room for a happier species. In a conversation with Ursula, who is sceptical about his fanatical detestation of decadent modern civilization, Birkin thunders : "The whole idea is dead. Humanity itself is dry-rotten. There are myriads of human beings hanging on the bush—and they look very nice and rosy, your healthy young men and women. But they are Apples of Sodom, Dead Sea-fruits, gall-apples. It is not true that they had any significance ; their insides are full of bitter, corrupt ash, Humanity is a huge aggregate of lies, and a huge lie is less than a small truth. Humanity is less, far less than the individual, because the individual may sometimes be capable of truth, and humanity is a tree of lies. I abhor humanity ; I wish it was swept away. It could go, and there would be no absolute loss, if every human being perishes tomorrow."

The indictment is Swiftian in its savagery of indignation, but it is free from misanthropy, because, like G.B. Shaw, Lawrence also believed that the Life Force progresses steadily, trampling upon and obliterating corrupt species to make room for the better and higher beings :

> " 'God cannot do without man', it was the saying of some great French religious teacher. But surely it is false. The eternal creative mystery could dispose of man, and replace him with a finer created being. The game was never up. The mystery of creation was fathomless, infallible, inexhaustible for ever. Races came and went, species passed away, but ever new species arose......The fountainhead was incorruptible...... To be man was nothing compared to the possibilities of the creative mystery. To have one's pulse beating direct from the mystery, this was perfection, unutterable satisfaction. Human or inhuman mattered nothing. The perfect pulse throbbed with indescribable being, miraculous unborn species."

So at the end of the novel Birkin and Ursula are ready to turn their backs upon ther corrupt society, like Lot and his wife on the eve of the destruction of Sodom or like Lawrence and his wife, wandering in different lands in search of healthier and happier societies.

4

Chapterwise Summary of the Novel

Chapter 1—Sisters

THE Chapter introduces to us Ursula and Gudrun Brangwen, 26 and 25 years old respectively. They are sisters and have the remote virgin look of modern girls, more intellectual than sensual. They are school mistresses, Gudrun of Art and Ursula of class. Gudrun was very beautiful, passive, soft-skinned and soft-libed. She was tastefully dressed and her look of confidence and diffidence contrasted sharply with Ursula's sensitive expectancy ; but the latter was charmed by the beauty of her younger sister and was disposed to accept her opinions even when she could not subscribe to them. They are working and talking in the window-bay of their father's house in Beldover. Their conversation centres round marriage, and Gudrun says that the prospect of marriage and child-bearing does not excite her at all, but she may consider the offer of an attractive young man of sufficient means. She is anxious to know the mind of Ursula about marriage as an escape from her dull and monotonous life, where *nothing materialises* and *everything withers in the bud.* Ursula is puzzled, but seems to be inclined towards marriage and domesticity. Ursula was instinct with 'that strange brightness of an essential flame that is caught, meshed and contravened. She lived a good deal by herself, always thinking, trying to lay hold on life. Her active living was suspended, but underneath, in the darkness, something was coming to pass. She seemed to try *and put her hands out, like an infant in her womb* and she could not, not yet. Still she had a strange premonition of something yet to come. Gudrun has just returned from London after several years' stay there, and is not satisfied with her home, family and surroundings. Ursula herself had an undercurrent of loathing against the sordid, too familiar place, against the home, the milieu, and the whole atmosphere of this obsolete life. Yet she was free from that mocking, ironical cynicism which marked the manner of Gudrun.

The sisters suddenly remember that they have to attend the marriage of the daughter of Thomas Crich, an owner of coal-mines, and they prepare hastily for the occasion and set off towards the

Church. They were soon walking swiftly down the main road through the colliery town, and Gudrun 'shrank cruelly from the amorphous ugliness' of the place, and its ugly, meaningless people. She said to Ursula, "It is like a country in an underworld—it is another world. The people are all ghouls, and everything is ghostly—all soiled, everything sordid'. As they neared the place they had to pass through a group of women, colliers' wives, who were gazing at them, and their dress. Gudrun was overwhelmed with a feeling of fierce anger and wished to annihilate all of them so that the world was left clear for her.

They sat down outside the churchyard and began to watch the people coming to the Church. There came the old Mrs Crich, a queer unkempt figure, with Gerald, her eldest son, a fair, sun-tanned, well-made and well-dressed young man. "Gudrun lighted on him at once. There was something northern about him that magnetised her. In his clear northern flesh and his fair hair was a glisten like sunshine refracted through crystals of ice. His gleaming beauty, maleness, like a young, good-humoured, smiling, wolf, did not blind her to the significant, sinister stillness in his bearing, the lurking danger of his unsubdued temper. 'His totem is the wolf', she said to herself. 'His mother is an old, unbroken wolf'. She experienced a strange transport as if she had made a discovery, and her heart was tortured with a desire to see him again and make sure of her first impression. "Am I really singled out for him in some way, is there really some pale gold, arctic light that envelopes only us two?' She asked herself.

Ursula, on her part, was watching the birdes-maids, one of whom she knew personally, a tall, slow, reluctant woman, with a weight of fair hair and a pale long face. This was Hermione Roddice, a friend of the Criches. She was rich and her dress proclaimed this fact. She was impressive, yet not without a dash of repulsiveness. Her long, pale face, that she carried lifted up, seemed almost drugged, as if a strange mass of thoughts coiled in the darkness within her, and she was never allowed to escape. Her father was a Derbyshire Baronet of the old school, she was a woman of the new school, full of intellectuality and over-consciousness. She was interested in reform and in public cause, but she was a man's woman, captivated by the manly world. She was familiar with many men of repute, most of whom were known to Gudrun also in London. She had met Hermione twice on equal terms in London, but here their social standing was quite different. Hermione was well-dressed and conscious of her intellectual distinction. No one could put her down, because she stood among the first. She was unassailable, beyond the world's judgement. Yet there was 'a secret Chink in her armour, a terrible void, a deficiency of being within her. And she craved for Rupert Birkin, an inspector of schools known to Ursula also, to close up this void, which all her defences could not heal up. But Birkin whom she hankered after was perverse and always fought her off. And they had been lovers now for years and she knew that he

was now leaving her, to be free. But still she believed in her strength to keep him. He was a man of knowledge, and she was the central touchstone of truth. She only needed his conjunction with her. She had dressed herself only to attract him, knowing that he would surely be there, and would not deny her. But he was not there and the lady felt depressed, consumed with a pang of hopelessness beyond death.

Meanwhile the bride arrived along with her father, Mr. Crich, old, careworn and sickly. Then came the bridegroom with Rupert Birkin in his train. Birkin was thin, pale and ill-looking. His figure was narrow, but nicely made. He was dressed correctly, yet his appearance was slightly ridiculous He had an air of isolation, and did not fit at all in the conventional occasion. Yet he subordinated himself to the common idea and affected to be quite ordinary and common place. Birkin created a strange impression on Ursula. 'He piqued her, attracted her and annoyed her. She wanted to know him more ; yet found it difficult. There was a certain hostility, a hidden, ultimate reserve in him, cold and inacessible.

Inside the Church marriage was going on. Hermione was standing near Birkin : she wanted to stand touching him. She was still looking pensive, which moved Birkin with pity. Feeling him looking at her, she lifted her face and sought his eyes. But he avoided her look, which made her miserable and hopeless. After the marriage was over Birkin came out with her, arm-in-arm : She had a rapt, triumphant look, like the fallen angel restored. And he was expressionless, neutralized, possessed by her as if it were his fate. Then came Gerald Crich, erect and complete ; Gudrun rose sharply and went away. She wanted to be alone, to know this strange, sharp inoculation that had changed the whole temper of her blood.

Chapter 2—Shortlands

The chapter describes the wedding feast at Shortlands, the residence of Crich family. Gerald was managing the show, because his father was ill and his mother utterly unfit for social functions. Yet she was moving about, and gravitated towards Birkin for talk, during which she made a pathetic confession that Gerald was so lonely that she wished fervently for him to have a good friend. Birkin remembered, with a shock, that Gerald had killed his brother unwittingly in childhood, and he was under the curse of Cain in the Bible. Very soon he was dragged into discussion with Gerald on the utility and value of the production of material goods and the rivalry it breeds among the nations. Towards the end again there is a talk about spontaneous individual action, which is the point of Birkin, and the action of an individual as determined by the collective opinion. The men do not agree, and the chapter closes with

the following comment on the relation of the two men :

"There was a panse of strange enmity between the two men, that was very near to love. It was always the same between them ; always their talk brought them into a deadly nearness of contact, a strange, perilousintimacy which was either hate or love, or both. Yet the heart of each burned for the other. This they would never admit... they were not going to be so unmanly and unnatural as to allow any heart-burning between them. They had not the faintest belief in deep relationship between men and men, and this prevented any development of their powerful but suppressed friendliness.

Chapter 3—Class-Room

The Chapter opens in Ursula's class-room, where a lesson in elementary botany was in progress, and the desks were littered with catkins, hazel and willow which the children were sketching. She was pressing the children with questions, so that they should know all they were to know before the class was over. Suddenly she started to find Birkin in the room, who proceeded to put on the lights. Then he turned curiously to look at Ursula. Her eyes were round and wondering. bewildered, her mouth quivered slightly. She looked like one who is suddenly wakened. There was a living, tender beauty, like a tender light of dawn shining from her face. He looked at her with a new pleasure, feeling gay in his heart. He moved silently from desk to desk ; Ursula watched him in arrested silence. Suddenly he lifted his head, and her heart quickened at the flicker of his voice. He was suggesting that the children should sketch the male and female flowers in yellow and red in order to learn the basic fact—'red little spiky stigmas of the female flowers, dangling yellow male catkins, yellow pollen flying from one to the other'.

At this point a knock came at the gate and Lady Hermione stepped into the room. She expressed keen interest in the flowers and sat watching them till the lesson was over. Then she rose up and came to Birkin, and at once discussion started. She asked Birkin if it was good to force up the consciousness of young children, or it would be better to have them untouched, spontaneous simple, crude animals, than grow up crippled in the soul. To her knowing meant nothing. To this Birkin replied harshly, "knowledge means everything to you. Even your animalism you want in your head......your passion is a lie...it is your will, you want to clutch things and have them in your power. Because you haven't got any real body, any dark sensual body of life, you have no sensuality you do not want spontaneity ; you want pornography—looking at yourself in mirrors, watching your naked animal actions in mirrors, so that you can have all in your consciousness, make it all mental. Sensuality—the great dark knowledge you can't have

in your head. It is a fulfilment. It is death to one's self—but it is coming into being of another. It is knowledge in the blood—when the mind and the known world is drowned in darkness—there must be the deluge". Hermione turned to Ursula with a jeering exclamation at Birkin's nonsense, and while leaving the place invited her suspected rival to her place. Ursula was secretly watching Birkin and she discovered a curious hidden richness in his frail, pale body—the powerful beauty of life itself. As they left her, she sat alone and motionless, and burst into tears—bitterly weeping, but for misery or joy, she never knew.

Chapter 4—Diver

The week passed away. On the Saturday morning Gudrun and Ursula set out for a walk towards the lake Willey Water. The atmosphere was translucent and grey : The morning was full of new creation. The two girls drifted swiftly till they came to a mossy boat-house near the corner of the lake. Suddenly, from the boat-house a white figure came running, and launched in a white arc through the air into the lake water, and began to swim vigorously. He was the sole possessor of the world of cold water.

Gudrun watched him with envy, but Ursula shuddered at the thought of cold water. It was Gerald Crich who saw them and exulted at his advantage, his possession of a world to himself. He was immune and perfect, happy in his isolation in the new element. Gudrun envied him almost painfully ; this momentary possession of pure isolation was so desirable to her that she almost cursed her position on the dry road. 'God' what it is to be a man, she cried, 'the freedom, the liberty, the mobility". As they moved on they began talking about Gerald, and his progressive ideas. 'He's got *go*' said Ursula and Gudrun replied with 'where does his *go* go to, what becomes of it ?" "It goes in applying latest appliances" added Ursula, and abruptly referred to the fact that he shot his brother unwittingly, as they were playing with a gun. Gudrun was frightened.

They went forward and saw Laura Crich, Gerald's newly married sister and Lady Hermione in the field on the other side of the hedge. Hermione cheered them and repeated her invitation to visit her place. The sisters proceeded homeward talking caustcially of the impudent woman who flaunted her superiority even by her air of modesty. They settled again in their monotonous routine, which sometimes horrified Ursula as her inevitable doom for life. But she never really accepted it. Her spirit was active. Her life was like a shoot that is growing steadily, but which has not yet come above the ground.

Chapter 5—In the Train

This Chapter describes the trip of Birkin and Gerald to London. They met by chance at the station, and while waiting for the train started chatting on various subjects. The ball was set rolling by an article in the *Daily Telegraph* which Gerald had been reading. The author had stated there that 'there must arise a man to give us new values and new attitude to life or else we shall be a crumbling nothingness in a few years'. The train came and steamed off, but their talk went on. Birkin opined that one must get rid of the old before anything new could appear—even in the self". Gerald inquired sceptically if society had really become so rotten, and Birkin returned vehemently that it was full of lies. People have the ideal of a perfect world, to realize while they are covering the earth with foulness—labour and productivity, getting and spending: But "man must live for *something*". Gerald joined issue with him on this point, and Birkin smelt malice and callousness in his arguments. Then he put a straight question, "what do you think is the aim and object of your life, Gerald ?" Gerald was puzzled and gave an evasive reply. Birkin, on his part, wanted to love one woman only in his life, which Gerald could not bring himself to accept as a sufficient aim for himself. To this Birkin again added as to what was the centre of his life, apart from love. Gerald replied that it had no centre ; it was artificially held together by the social mechanism. Birkin stated reflectively that modern life has lost its centre ; there is nothing there, "It seems to me there remains only this perfect union with a woman—sort of ultimate marriage—and there's not anything else". Gerald was unable to accept this. He, of course, felt warmly towards him and enjoyed his proximity, yet he secretly believed in his own superior experience.

The discussion ended with Birkin's description of the place where he proposed to lodge in London. It was a part of London Bohemia, haunted by young artists who flouted all convention. He looked up and noticed a flicker of curious desire in the blue eyes of Gerald ; there was a beautiful passivity in his body which was attractive. At last they reached London ; the home of crowded humanity, which made Birkin heart-sick.

Chapter 6—Creme de Menthe

Gerald and Birkin met again in the Cafe several hours after their arrival. As Gerald stepped into the hall his eye fell upon Birkin seated with a young woman, who was introduced to him as Miss Darrington. She was small and delicately built, with a flowery softness about her, mixed with a certain grossness of spirit, which brought a gleam in the eyes of Gerald. In course of the conversation it is revealed that she is a society girl, who was

merely a mistress of Halliday, a Bohemian artist. After her pregnancy, however, she was sent into the country by him, with an express command never to come back again. So, she is on the tenterhooks of fear and suspense about Halliday's reaction on seeing her there. But she is attracted by Gerald who has already been taken with her delicate charm—'And on them there seemed to float a curious iridescence, a sort of film of disintegration, and sullenness like oil on water'. The girl was greeted with anger and surprise by Halliday, her former lovers, who entered the room soon after and gravitated to the place where Minette (so he called her) was sitting with the two men. But he was a timid-hearted youngman and soon reconciled himself to the situation. Meanwhile the mysterious current was passing from Gerald's body into the bosom of Minnette —"her eyes seemed to be looking through into his naked organism. He felt she was compelled to him, fated to come into contact with him......Also he felt, she must relinquish herself into his hands, and be subject to him. She was so profane, slave-like, watching him, absorbed by him......She looked full into his face, and her blue, inchoate eyes had now a furtive look, a look of a knowledge of evil, dark and indomitable. A flame ran secretly to his heart"....... A change was slowly coming over her under the influence of wine : "Minette sat near to Gerald, and she seemed to become soft, subtly to infuse herself into his bone, as if she were passing into him as a black, electric flow. Between her and Gerald was this silence and this black, electric comprehension in the darkness".

They were all invited by Halliday to spend the night in his apartments. In the sitting room there were several statues, wood-carvings from the West Pacific, strange and disturbing. One was a woman sitting naked in a strange posture and looking tortured, her abdomen stuck out. She was sitting in child-birth. The statue conveyed the suggestion of the extreme physical sensation beyond the limits of mental consciousness'. But the time came for retirement and Gerald went with Minette to pass the night with her, who was determined to know him in her blood.

Chapter 7—Totem

In the morning Gerald woke up late, and as he came back to his room again he found Minette, the soft, helpless thing wide awake—"She seemed to flow back, almost like liquid from his approach, to sink helplessly away from him. Her inchoate look of a violated slave......made his nerves quiver with acutely desirable sensation. After all, his was the only will, she was the passive substance of his will......And then he knew, he must go away from her, there must be pure separation between them." Still she respected Gerald and took his address against future eventuality, when she may need his help.

Chapter 8—Breadalby

The scene now shifts to the ancestral residence of Lady Hermione, a Georgian house, overlooking a lawn, a few trees, down to a string of fish-ponds in the hollow of the silent park. Apart from Ursula, Gudrun, Birkin and Gerald, the persons present were a young Italian woman, slight and fashionabte, a young, athletic-looking Miss Bradley, a learned, dry Baronet (Sir Joshua) of fifty, who was always making witticisms and laughing at them heartily in a harsh, horse-laugh. Then came the great brother of the lady, Alexander Roddice, 'striding romantically like a Meredith hero who remembers Disraeli. After tea the Lady and guests went out for a walk, only. Birkin obdurately refused to join the party. As they returned Hermione enquired after him and at last discovered him in her room, busy copying the Chinese drawing of geese. She wanted to know the cause of this mysterious attraction to Chinese painting. 'It was a deadful tyranny, an obsession in her, to know all he knew'. Birkin was provoked by her insistence and exclaimed caustically, 'I know what centres the Chinese live from—the hot, stinging centrality of a goose in the flux of cold water and mud—fire of the cold-burning mud, the lotus mystery'. Hermione was shocked and turned away in sick convulsion. She felt an inner dissolution under the occult potency of her man. She exercised her will to control this feeling, but in vain. She went away like a corpse. She sought desperately to divert herself through a political discussion, followed by a biblical dance, grand and spectacular.

Gudrun, as Ruth, was clinging to Ursula, as Naomi, with a desperate passion, mixed with subtle malevolence. Gerald was watching her and 'the essence of that female, subterranean, recklessness and mockery penetrated his blood. Birkin had seen the brilliant frustration and helplessness of Ursula. She was rich, full of dangerous power. She was like a strange unconscious bud of powerful womanhood. He was unconsciously drawn to her. She was his future. He joined the dance in a mood of irresponsible gaiety, which was hateful to Hermione. She was provoked to think that he was moving out of her circle—'her soul writhed in black subjugation to him, because of his power to escape, to exist, other than she did, because he was not consistent, not a man, less than a man'.

Next morning as Birkin got up admiring the antique perfection of the house he gradually sensed the spirit of hostility which was pervading the place which had become quite familiar to him through long intimacy. He naturally felt himself to be in complete opposition to it all. Everything wore the appearance of death and rottenness and the place had the sepulchral air of a royal Egyptian tomb. Suddenly he got up and went out, under the mechanical gaze of Hermione, who was like a ship sinking into the sea, yet the unfailing mechanism of her will worked on. She shepherded her guests to the pond for a bathing excursion which was a success. Then came the

dinner with political discussion, which was resumed after many of the guests had departed. Sir Joshua voted for the social equality of man, to which Gerald opposed the unifying principle of work, every individual doing the bit of work for which he was fit. Hermione added, 'If we would only realize that in the spirit we are all one—all brothers there, the rest would not matter. There will be no envy, no struggle for power' After the party had left, Birkin turned round to Hermione in bitter declamation that the real truth about man was contrary to her notion. Men were physically equal in the respect that they needed food and shelter for their survival, but as soon as their basic needs had been satisfied every individual showed the uniqueness of his own self or spirit. Hermione was looking at him with leering eyes, along her checks. He could feel violent waves of hatred and loathing of all he said, coming out of her unconsciousness. Later, however, he felt that he had been violent and cruel to poor Hermione, and he wanted to recompense her. He entered her room and found her busy writing letters. He sat down with a book and Hermione lifted her eyes and mechanically fixed them on him. She could not go on with her work : her whole mind was in chaos : darkness seemed to break over her. Then she realized that he was a wall obstructing her existence. Waves of hatred, like shocks of electricity ran through her entire frame : her arms quivered and became strong. Her hand closed on a blue, beautiful ball of lapis lazuli on her table, and in a frenzy of destructive fury she sent the ball crashing on his neck. She would have destroyed him, had he not run out of the room for safety. He went out into the cool lap of nature, rolled naked among the plants, caressed by their softness and pricked by their leaves till he forgot his wrong and also the whole humanity. 'Here was his world, he wanted no body and nothing but the lovely, subtle, responsive vegetation, and himself, his own living self. He was weary of the old ethic, of the human beings, and of humanity. He left for the town and for a week or two was confined to bed, while Hermione lapsed into her self-esteem and conviction of the rightness of her spirit.

Chapter 9—Coal-Dust

One afternoon on their way home from school Ursula and Gudrun had to stop at a railway crossing till the engine had passed and the gates opened. Whilst the two girls waited, Gerald Crich trotted up on a red Arab mare. He saluted the two girls and stopped at the crossing. As the locomotive entered with a noise the mare became restive and Gerald exerted his will to control. There ensued a long struggle between the animal's wild impulse to run away and the man's iron determination to stop it. Gudrun watched the scene spell-bound, the glistening weight of the man pressing into the body of the mare. 'It made Gudrun faint with poignant

dizziness, which seemed to penetrate to her heart', while Ursula shouted, "Let her go ! Let her go, you fool, you *fool* !'

But Gerald was wild and ruthless, thrusting his sharp spurs into flanks till they began to bleed. The sight of the blood made Ursula frantic in her opposition and hate, while the spectacle of the bright spurs pressing relentessly into the soft sides of the mare made Gudrun white and giddy : the world reeled and passed into nothingness.

As the gate opened and the horseman galloped out the gate-keeper remarked, "A masterful young jockey that'll have his own road, if even anybody would'. To him Ursula shouted, "He is a fool and bully. Does he think it's manly, to torture a horse ? It's living thing, why should he bully it and torture it ?"

Gudrun had shouted to Gerald as he brushed by her side, 'I should think you're proud'. But as she walked homeward "she was as if numbed in her mind by the sense of indomitable soft weight of the man, bearing down into the living body of the horse".

They were passing between blocks of miners' houses, and could see several miners washing on the open, naked down to the loins : 'It seemed to envelop Gudrun in a labourer's caress, there was in the whole atmosphere, a resonance of physical men, a glamorous thickness of labour and maleness, surcharged in the air'. Now she realized that this was the world of powerful, underworld men, who spent most of their time in darkness—the strong, dange-rous, underworld, mindless, inhuman'. She was consumed with a strange sensation, half attraction and half repulsion towards that violent destructive world.

Chapter 10—Sketch-Book

One morning the sisters were sketching by the side of Willey Water, at the remote end of the lake. Gudrun had reached a gravelly shoal, and was seated like a Buddhist, staring fixedly at the water-plants that rose succulent from the mud of the low shores. What she could see was mud, soft and watery, and from its festering chill, water-plants rose up, thick and cool and fleshy, very straights turgid......she could feel their turgid fleshy structure in a sensuous vision. Ursula was watching the butterflies flying together in a halo of orange colour. Then she rose up and drifted away uncon-sciously, like the butterflies.

Gudrun sat absorbed as in a stupor, and then was roused from her trance by the sound of an approaching boat. She noticed Gerald and Hermione. Her heart was thrilled because 'Gerald was her

escape from the heavy slough of the pale, underworld, automatic colliers. He started out of the mud. He was master'. Gerald was not yet consciously interested in the girl, but seeing her stand watching him he steered towards her, while Hermione was greeting her cheerfully. She wanted to see her sketch-book which the girl offered reluctantly to him. He bent forward to take it from her hand, then he remembered her last words—'you are very proud'—to him and stiffened with pride. "And as if in a spell, Gudrun was aware of his body, stretching and surging like the marsh-fire......towards her, his hand coming straight forward like a stem'. She became giddy. He took the sketch-book, and while handling it to Hermione, demanded to see it first. The lady was nettled and suffered the book to drop down into the water. As Gerald descended to redeem the book a series of courtesies, not untinged with malice, passed between the ladies. Gerald watched Gudrun closely. "There was a body of cold power in her. He saw her dangerous, hostile, spirit that could stand undiminished and unabated." They exchanged glances and before he left 'the bond was established between them—they were of the same kind, a sort of diabolic freemasonry subsisted between them. Wherever they met, they would be secretly associated. She knew her power over him, and her soul exulted."

Chapter 11—An Island

Meanwhile Ursula had wandered from the Lake along the course of a stream. It was a sunny afternoon and the landscape was alive with the songs of birds and the beauty of flowers. She passed by the deserted mill-house and mounted the bank by the sluice till she reached the top and suddenly caught sight of Birkin busy patching a small boat. He asked her to sit beside him and they were soon engaged in small talks about his recent illness and his prospects in life. Ursula saw a piece of chocolate paper which she picked up and made a paper-boat, and let it float in the stream.

Their conversation reached a crucial point when Birkin referred to the sordidness of the social life. He went on in his bitter, melancholy tone that Humanity is dead and dry-rotten and the youngmen one sees about so handsome and rosy in appearance are really dead at heart. Like Dead-Sea fruits they are full only of dust and ashes. Ursula was troubled and puzzled, and after a pause enquired if he himself was apart from the common human herd. To this he replied in the same tone, "I loathe myself as a human being. Humanity is a huge aggregate lie : it is less, far less than an individual, because the individual may sometimes be capable of truth......But I abhor humanity ; I wish it was swept away. There would be no loss, for reality would be untouched ; the tree of life would then be rid of the intolerable burden of the Dead Sea Fruit, the infinite weight of mortal lies. The universe of nature will remain purged of the foul

humanity'. The prospect pleased Ursula, because she also was disgusted with the hideous humanity. She watched Birkin with a mixed feeling, desiring the man to herself, but hating the preacher. At last she said, 'But you believe in individual love even if you don't believe in loving humanity' ? and he replied sharply, "I don't believe in love at all. Love is one of the emotions, and it is only a part of any human relationship." Ursula rejoined, "And if you don't believe in love, what do you believe in ? you believe in nothing visible, except grass and birds : your world is a poor show." Birkin was silent, wrapped in his insufferable, aloof superiority......Ursula was puzzled by the duality in feeling he created in her ; but she secretly liked 'his wonderful, desirable life-rapidity that lay behind his stiff priggishness. "He looked up at her : He saw her face strangely kindled as if suffused from within by powerful sweet fire. His soul was arrested in wonder, and in pure perfect attraction, he moved towards her. She sat like a strange queen, almost supernatural in her glowing smiling richness."

He resumed the thread of his talk on love ? "The point about love is that we hate the word because we have vulgarized it. It ought to be proscribed, tabooed from utterance, for many years, till we get a new, a better idea'. There was a beam of understanding between them. They got up and went to the water's edge. Birkin started plucking daisies and dropping them one by one into the current. They formed a little flotilla and drifted like a company of white specks.

Then they decided to follow them in the boat. As they glided towards the shore Ursula was delighted with the sight of the floating daisies, 'tiny radiant things, like points of exaltation here and there' : At last they landed and stood aside. "The little conflict into which they had fallen had torn their consciousness and left them like two impersonal forces there in contact'.

Then he informed her that he had rooms there at the mill where they can have some good time. He further stated that he was inclined to give up his work altogether ; it had become so dead to him. 'One must throw everything away, everything—to get one last thing one wants', he said. Ursula expected him to say 'love', but he called it 'freedom together'.

A loud barking of dogs was heard and Birkin said it was perhaps Hermione coming to superintend the furnishing of his rooms. Ursula was taken aback, but he informed her that there was no more any love between them, but he did'nt want to be churlish to her. Thus they moved towards the house.

Chapter 12—Carpeting

It is a continuation of the previous chapter. Hermione and Birkin are busy measuring the rooms and discussing the way of furnishing them, while Ursula and Gerald are watching them. As they sat down to tea Ursula referred to Gerald's inhuman gesture to subdue a mare, a living, sensitive creature, to his will. Gerald justified himself by saying that he was simply following the natural order which permitted a man to take a horse and make it useful in any way he liked. Hermione agreed with him and deprecated the sentimental notion that all lower creatures were identical with men. She went on praising the efficacy of will by virtue of which she herself got over her natural shyness. Ursula was at once fascinated and repelled by her imperious manner, but Birkin exclaimed that it was fatal to use the will like that. Then turning to Gerald he stated that a horse had indeed *two wills*: with the one 'it wants to put itself in the human power completely—and with the other, it wants to be free'. He concluded with—'And woman is the same as horses : two wills act in opposition inside her'. Hermione could bear no more. She got up and persuaded Ursula to follow her into the open air outside. Ursula obeyed because Birkin seemed to her 'almost a monster of hateful arrogance'. The lady began to talk of her Birkin's habit of breaking things to pieces and murdering their beauty and their wholeness. They came back to the men and prepared to depart. While leaving Ursula turned to Gerald and said, "I must say that, however man is lord of the beast and the fowl, he has no right to violate the feelings of the inferior creation." She ran home plunged in thought about her feelings towards Birkin. She was hostile to him. But she was held to him by some mysterious bond. 'Now and again, violent little shudders would come over her, out of her subconsciousness, and she knew it was the fact that she had stated her challenge to Birkin, and he had, consciously and unconsciously, accepted. It was a fight to the death between them—or to new life : Though in what the conflict lay, no one could say.

Chapter 13—Mino

It is a crucial chapter in the development in Birkin-Ursula relationship. They meet in Birkin's room in the town to which Ursula has come by invitation. She is full of expectation that a solid proposal or confession of love will be coming from Birkin. But she is puzzled, provoked, and exasperated as he goes on expounding his philosophy of love in a language which sounds as a jargon to her. The only distraction from the tedious eloquence comes from the sudden entry of a wild female cat into the parlour, which rouses Mino, the domestic male cat into activity to subdue and chase away the female intruder. The argument of Birkin proceeds as follows :—

"I can't say it is love I have to offer. It is something much more impersonal, and harder—and rarer. At the very last, one is alone, beyond the influence of love. There is a real impersonal me, that is beyond love, beyond any emotional relationship. So it is with you...... And it is there I would want to meet you—not in the emotional loving plane—but there beyond where there is no speech and no terms of agreement......Only there needs the pledge between us, that we will both cast off everything, cast off ourselves even, and cease to be, so that which is perfectly ourselves can take place in us. Personal beauty has no significance here, and the physical vision is suspended". He does not want her beauty, her feelings and her ideas. He wants a strange conjunction—not meeting and mingling—'but an equilibrium, a pure balance of two single beings —as the stars balance each other'. At last they were weary of this talk and Birkin shifted the subject by asking Ursula to tell him every thing abo ut her family .She proceeded with her account and Birkin watcher her : 'Her face was beautiful, and full of baffled light as she told him all things that had hurt her or perplexed her too deeply. He seemed to warm and comfort his soul at the beautiful light of her nature'. But as she mocked at his talk of suffering, he was almost afraid and said to himself. "Here was one who would go to the whole lengths of heaven or hell, whichever she had to go. He was afraid of a woman capable of such abandon, such dangerous thoroughness of destructivity yet he chuckled within himself'. At parting he had to yield to the wishes of Ursula—"She put her arms round his neck. He enfolded her, and kissed her subtly, murmurring in a voice of love, and irony, and submission, 'yes—my love—yes—my love. Let love be enough then. I love you then—I love you. I'm bored by the rest'.

Chapter 14—Water-Party

Every year old Mr. Crich gave a public water-party on the lake. It was the occasion when he could gather some people of the district together in festivity with him. He loved to give pleasure to his dependents and to those poorer than himself on this occasion Laura played the hostess in place of her mother, and Gerald assumed the charge of amusements on the water. All our characters were gathered there, and the sisters joined the party in their best dress, along with their parents who were greeted cordially by Birkin, Lady Hermione and by Gerald himself. The sisters, however, were afraid of the crowd and wanted to enjoy themselves more freely and alone. So they requested Gerald to provide them a boat which they could steer to a remoter place. Gerald did the needful. They reached a little place where a tiny stream flowed into the lake. They landed on a gravelly bank and decided to bathe and play in the water. They were in high spirits, intoxicated with freedom. After their bath Ursula sat down and began to croon a song. Hearing this Gudrun

proposed to dance to her tune. It was a frantic dance and she flung her body and soul into it till she came near a knot of Highland cattle, which watched her in silence till one of them assumed a violent posture. Gerald and Birkin reached there at this juncture and the former drove away the cattle. But Gudrun followed undaunted and resumed her dance before the standing cattle. Gerald went after her and protested at her madness. She was filled with a wave of violence and gave him a sudden blow on the face. Gerald was stunned, and a dangerous flame darkened his eyes : 'you have struck the first blow', he said at last. 'And I shall strike the last', she retorted involuntarily. A moment later she told him gently not to be angry with her. A flame flew over him, and he unconsciously stammered, 'I'm not angry with you. I'm in love with you'. His mind was gone and he found it hard to control himself. She looked at his face with fixed eyes and her blood ran cold.

Meanwhile Birkin was with Ursula and in a moment started cutting a caper with an irresponsible gaiety which the girl did not approve. So he sat down beside her and waited for Gerald to come back.

Gerald and Gudrun came and they sat down to smoke ; the light overhead died out, the moon gained brightness, and seemed to begin to smile forth her ascendancy. Far down the lake lights began to appear and music came out in little puffs. Boats began to ply with lighted lanterns on them. Birkin lighted two lanterns and the couples took their boats and drifted separately into the dark space of the lake. Gudrun was sitting close to Gerald, 'balanced in separation' and Gerald was all the while aware of the growing space between them. Gudrun watched him : "And her breast was keen with passion for him, he was so beautiful in his male stillness and mystery. It was a certain pure effluence of maleness, like an aroma from his softly, firmly moulded contours, that touched her with ecstasy, a thrill of pure intoxication". They drifted almost motionless in the silence. Then suddenly there was a great shout and confusion on the waters and noise of paddles churning the lake. They rushed towards the spot, troubled and irritated and learnt on arrival there that Diana, one of Gerald's sisters had dropped into water. Gerald lost no time in undressing and plunging into the cold water and his absence overwhelmed Gudrun with a terrible sense of fatality. He rose up and clambered into the boat beside her : 'Oh, the beauty of the subjection of his loins, white and dimly luminous ......was too much for her, too final a vision. She knew it, it was fatal. The terrible hopelessness of fate, and of beauty, such beauty ! And she knew it was not all good, and that she would never go beyond him, he was the final approximation of life to her". He jumped again into the water and remained into the cold depth for a longer time, and when he came up and climbed into the boat he was exhausted. Haply Birkin reached the spot at that very juncture and proceeded to row his boat homeward. Gerald was not willing to leave while the drowned remained under water, but Birkin was

adamant that he must go home and rest, while they were letting the water out to reclaim the bodies. Gudrun was soon by his side and he related to her his experience of the vast universe of water below the surface, cold like bell and keen like a sword. Then he added that there was one thing about his family—'once anything goes wrong, it can never be put right again'.

Meanwhile Birkin had opened the sluice gate and the water rushed out with great noise. Then he came to Ursula and moved homeward. He told her that he did not mind about the dead, once they were gone—'The worst of it is, they cling on the living, and won't let go !' They walked on in silence, under the trees, and then he said slowly : "There is life which belongs to death, and there is life which isn't death; one is tired of life which belongs to death—our kind of life. I want love that is like sleep, like being born again, vulnerable like a body that just comes into the world'. She listened making out what he said : She knew as well as he, that words themselves do not convey meaning, that they are but a gesture we make, a dumb show......And she seemed to feel his gesture through her blood'.. Suddenly he stopped, bent down and began to kiss her face and brow slowly and gently. She did not respond and they resumed their walk : "Then suddenly, to show him she was no shallow prude, she stopped and held him tight, hard against her, and covered his face with hard fierce kisses of passion. In spite of his otherness, the old blood beat up in him". He only wanted her, with an extreme desire that seemed inevitable as death. He went back to the place where Gerald was supervising the search for the dead bodies. Birkin told him that he should not waste his own life by forcing him into horrors and putting 'a mill-stone of beastly memories' round his neck. As he was about to leave Gerald put his arms across his shoulders and said coaxingly, "you mean a lot to me, Rupert, more than you know".

The night passed and the dawn revealed the dead bodies, Diana clinging to the neck of the young man, son of a local doctor, who had dived to rescue her. The Colliery people were benumbed by the catas-trophe and the air was charged with a sense of the supernatural. Gudrun was preparing herself for the serious part she was eager to play as a comforter of Gerald. Ursula was deeply and passionately in love with Birkin, and had become perfectly callous about all the talk of the accident. She mostly sat by herself waiting passionately for Birkin, all eyes and all ears, for him. Her suspense was past endurance.

Chapter 15—Sunday-Evening

As the day wore on and Birkin was not seen, the life-blood seemed to ebb away from Ursula and in her empty mind the gloom

of despair gathered fast. She was drugged with the thought of death. Her earthly journey was over and death appeared to be the inevitable consummation. So long she had held out and resisted. Now was the time to relinquish. "She could feel within the darkness, the terrible assertion of her body, the unutterable anguish of dissolution'. Death was a relief from a life of barren routine, without any inner meaning and significance : "What a joy ! What a gladness to think that whatever humanity did, it could not seize hold of the kingdom of death. The sea they turned into a soiled road of commerce ; the air they have parcelled out to certain owners ; but the kingdom of death put them all to scorn. "How beautiful, how grand and perfect death was ! There one would wash off all the lies and ignominy and dirt—a perfect bath of cleanness and glad refreshment".

She was surprised to hear of the arrival of a visitor and Birkin stood on her threshold drenched with rain. When they had time to sit together and converse Ursula gave him a sharp rebuke for his criminal neglect of the body. He remained only for a short time, and when he was gone Ursula was filled with a poignant hatred of him. She could not account for it : she was translated beyond herself and for several days went about possessed by that exquisite force of hatred. When she heard he was ill again, her hatred only intensified itself a few degrees. 'It was as if he were a beam of essential enmity, a beam of light that revoked her whole world.'

Chapter 16—Man to Man

Birkin lay sick and motionless, in pure opposition to everything, and half in love with easeful death. He knew that his life rested with Ursula, but he was not ready to accept the kind of love she proffered. The very thought of "marriage and children, and a life lived together in the horrible privacy of domestic and connubial satisfaction was repulsive to him." True, he hated promixuity even worse than marriage, and a liaison was only another kind of coupling, reactionary from the legal marriage, far worse than the action. On the whole he hated sex, that turned a couple into two broken halves. He wanted to be single in himself, the woman single in herself. "But woman was so horrible and clutching, she had such a lust for possession in love—Woman, the great Mother of everything, out of whom proceeded everything and to whom everything must finally be rendered up". It makes no difference whether the woman is Hermione or Ursula ; the instinctive female tyranny was their common trait. He wanted a different kind of relationship 'the pure duality of polarization, each one free from any contamination of the other. "The man has his pure freedom the woman hers. Each acknowledges the perfection of the polarized sex-circuit".

Gerald came to see him in his illness. He loved him, but did not quite believe in him. He thought that his own understanding was sounder than that of volatile Birkin. They talked of Diana's death and its effect, of the business of Gerald and then of his relation with Gudrun. This led Gerald to the disclosure of the incident during the Water-party—Gudrun's mad dance before the cattle and the blow she gave to him on the face. Again they drifted to death, and Birkin took occasion to expound his idea of death—of a race or civilization. Death comes when the creative, spontaneous spirit is dead and it is followed by a long process of decadence or degradation. Gerald listened to his talk sceptically and then returned to the death of his sister, which had upset his father, who himself was at the death's door. He was now desperately trying to save her youngest daughter, a queer child, fond of painting. Ordinary schooling will not suit her temper, and the old man has been advised to engage Gudrun to teach her painting privately. Quite other things were going through Birkin's mind. 'He was confronted with another problem—'the problem of love and eternal conjunction between two men'. He reminded Gerald of the way in which the German knights pledged eternal friendship with each other—'made a little wound in their arms, and rubbed each other's blood into cut'. 'That is what we ought to do, without wounding our arms. We ought to swear to love each other implicity and perfectly without any possibility of going back on it.' Gerald wanted time to understand it better.

Birkin was watching him attentively and he saw in him 'a strange sense of fatality, as if he were limited to one form of existence only, a sort of fatal halfness'. This filled him with a sort of contempt or boredom : 'Gerald could never fly away from himself, in real indifferent gaiety. He had a clog, a sort of monomania At parting the two faced each other : "The eyes of the two met again, Gerald's were keen as a hawk's now suffused with warm light and unadmitted love, Birkin looked back as out of a darkness, unsounded and unknown, yet with a kind of warmth, that seemed to flow over Gerald's brain like fertile sleep".

Chapter 17—The Industrial Magnate

The chapter is devoted to an elaborate description of the Crich household and their management of the coalmines owned by them. The opening shows us Ursula and Gudrun in conversation with Mrs Kirk who had been a nurse of Gerald in his childhood. She tells them that she has nursed three of Mr. Crich's children and 'proper little terrors they were, that Gerald was a demon if ever there was one—wilful and masterful'. Sometimes old Mr. Crich lost his temper, shut them in the study and thrashed them, but all the while his wife paced up and down like a tiger outside,

with the very murder in her face. She had a face that could look death'.

Then comes the description of old Crich, now lying ill and helpless, as an industrial magnate.

He was a large employer of labour and brought to his management the spirit of Christian love and charity. He looked upon himself as inferior to his workmen, who, through poverty and labour were nearer to God and held in their hands the means of salvation. In them he worshipped the highest, the great, sympathetic, mindless Godhead of humanity. And all the while his wife had opposed him like a demon. 'Strange, like a bird of prey, with the fascinating beauty and abstraction of a hawk, she had beat against the bars of his philanthropy'. But he proved too strong for her and kept her prisoner, a hawk in the cage, and in that condition he loved her constantly and with intensity. But nothing could soften the fierceness of her hatred for the humiliating kindness of her husband to every body. Christiana Crich had little mercy for the whining rats that came to gnaw at the charity of Mr. Crich.

She was consumed in a fierce tension of opposition, like the negative pole of a magnet. But she silently, passively and almost mechanically submitted to the sexual demands of her husband and bore him many children. It was 'a relation of utter interdestruction'. And he who triumphed in the world, became more and more hollow in his vitality. But he always talked of his happy conjugal life and thought of her as pure and chaste : 'the white flame which was known to him alone, the flame of her sex, was a white flower of snow to his mind'.

Mr. Crich disliked Gerald in his boyhood and the latter returned the compliment. He was not interested in the coal industry and its management. He was fond of a sort of savagedom ; the days of Homer were his ideal. He had been sent to school 'which was so much death to him'. He refused to go to Oxford and preferred a German University, where he developed a strong curiosity 'to see and know' things in an objective, disinterested fashion. Then he tried war and after it travelled into the savage regions. He came home with a well-stored but cold mind and discovered a real adventure in coal mines. His father asked him to help in the firm and now he laid hold of the world with a sort of exulation. The system built by his father went to piece between two half-truths—his Christian charity and his allegiance to the association of the mine owners who were closing their firms to subdue their workers, demanding higher wages. Old Mr. Crich retired from business heart-broken and totally done up and Gerald became the sole manager. He set about placing the industry on the footing of scientific order and efficiency, in which human consideration had no room.

He looked upon the workers as mere instruments of production,

the veritable cogs in the business machine in which he himself occupied the central position. He was a man of strong, unbending will and prized it above everything else. "The will of man was the determining factor. Man was the arch-god of earth. Man's will was absolute, the only absolute. And it was his will to subjugate matter to his own ends. His will was now, to take the coal out of the earth, profitably'. He set himself to work, to put the great industry in order. He had learnt that the essential secret of life was harmony and he proceeded to put this principle into practice, translating the mystic word harmony into the practical word organization. His aim was to build a great perfect machine, a system, an activity of pure order, pure machanical repetition—eternal and infinite. And he succeeded marvellously :

"There was a new world, a new order, strict, terrible, inhuman, but satisfying in its very destructiveness. It was the first great step in undoing, the first great phase of chaos, the substitution of the mechanical principle for the organic, the destruction and pure mechanical organization. This is the first and finest state of chaos".

But this success was telling upon his inner organization. He was aware of a process of inner disintegration. 'It was as if his centres of feeling were drying up' below his healthy and robust appearance. He knew there was no equilibrium. He wanted relief and hitherto he had found it in women. But it was only momentary: 'He felt that his mind needed acute stimulation, before he could be physically roused'. And fate was at work to provide such a stimulation in the shape of Gudrun, who was to come to his house as art tutor to his young sister.

Old Mr. Crich, in his sickness and solitude, found his sole stay and strength in his love for his youngest daughter, Winifred. She was an odd, sensitive and inflammable child, but she loved her father and her pet animals. The father, as by some strange final illusion, felt as if all his fate depended upon his ensuring to Winifred her happiness. When he heard that Gudrun might come to help Winifred with her drawing and modelling he saw a road to salvation for his child. He did not, therefore, hesitate to appeal to Gudrun, and when she did come in response to his appeal he spared no means to make her feel at home in his house and eventually provided for a studio where she could work with freedom.

Chapter 18—Rabbit

Gudrun was cordially welcomed by Mr. Crich and introduced to her pupil, who very soon became intimate with her. Their work started with the painting of the pets—first her dog and next her

Rabbit was to be depicted. They went to the hutch and looked at the black-and-white rabbit called Bismarck. It was a wild and energetic creature not to be caught easily. Gudrun smiled sardonically and seized the rabbit as it crouched still, by its long ears. But in an instant it was in mid-air, flying like a spring coiled and released, as it lashed out, suspended from the ears. Gudrun found it hard to control 'that black and white tempest' and almost lost her presence of mind. Then her colour came up and a heavy rage possessed her like a cloud. She stood shaken as a house in the storm, her wrists were badly scored by the claws of the beast and a heavy cruelty welled up in her heart.

Gerald came round at this point and in a moment he saw, with subtle recognition, her sullen passion of cruelty. He advanced to help her. Gudrun saw his body tighten and saw a sharp blindness come into his eyes. 'The long, demon-like beast lashed out again, spread on the air like a dragon. The man's body, strung to its efforts, vibrated strongly. Swift as lightning he drew back and brought his free hand down like a hawk on the neck of the rabbit. There came an unearthly scream of the rabbit. It made one immense writhe and tore his wrists and his sleeves in a final convulsion. He looked at Gudrun, and the whitish, electric gleam in his face intensified. She looked at Gerald with strange, darkened eyes, strained with underworld knowledge, almost supplicating like those of a creature at his mercy, yet which is his ultimate victor. He saw in her eyes a 'white cruel recognition. There was a league between them abhorrent to both. She lifted her arm and showed a deep red score down the silken white flesh. The long shallow red rip seemed torn across his own brain, tearing the surface of his consciousness, letting through the forever unconscious, unthinkable ether of the beyond, the obscene beyond. There was a queer faint, obscene smile over his face. She looked at him and was him, and knew that he was initiate as she was initiate.

Chapter 19—Moony

After his illness Birkin went to the south of France without informing any body of his whereabouts. Ursula, left alone, felt as if everything were lapsing. The world was a mist and she alone was real 'like a rock in a wash of flood-water'. From the bottom of her heart she detested all grown up people, and loved only children and animals. Very soon, however the spirit of repudiation yielded place to a longing for pure love, which overcame other feelings. She went out one evening with a suffering mind.

She came to the Willey Water and passed into the wood and found a sort of magic peace among the trees, wrapped in black darkness. She was startled by the appearance of the moon above the trees. But it seemed so mysterious, with its white and deathly

smiie. She hurried, cowering from the white presence. She would see the pond at the mill before she went home. She saw a shadow moving by the water. It would be Birkin, she meditated indifferently. He looked small and dark and wandered nearer, unaware of her presence. He was muttering something and touching unconsciously the dead husks of flowers. He stood staring at the water and then picking up a stone threw it sharply at the pond. Ursula saw the bright moon, leaping and swaying all distorted in her eyes. Again there was a burst of sound followed by a burst of brilliant light, broken into flakes and flying like white birds. In the centre, however, there was a vivid, incandescent quivering of white moon not quite destroyed. Birkin was watching and then throwing stones like a mad man. Ursula was dazed and remained in the gloom motionless and spent. She watched the water where the fragments of light came together reunited, heaving, rocking, dancing, falling back as in panic, but always flickering nearer. At last she went to him and requested him to stop the throwing of stones. They sat down on the roots of the trees in the shadow. He remembered the beauty of her eyes, which were sometimes filled with light like spring, suffused with wonderful promise. So he said to her slowly, "There is a golden light in you, which I wish you would give me'. This was a good start and Ursula broached the intimate subject of love which he was denying her. She complained passionately : "You are just egocentric, you never have any enthusiasm, you never come out with any spark towards me. You want yourself really, and your own affairs. And you just want me to be there, to serve you. You don't even love me." Birkin was proceeding to explain his position, but he stopped, thinking it useless to convince her by words—'This was a paradisal bird that could never be netted, it must fly by itself to heart'. But Ursula repeated her charge and Birkin replied, "I do not want to serve you, because there is nothing there to serve......I wouldn't give a straw for your female ego. I want you to drop your assertive *will*. I want you to trust yourself so implicitly that you can let go yourself. I don't mean let your self go in Dionysic ecstatic way : I know you can do that. But I hate ecstasy'.

They sat still for sometime, then she put her hand tentatively on his : 'Do you really love me ?' She said. Birkin was amused at her 'war cry' and returned, "yes, I do. I love you, and I know it's final, so why say any more about it ?" She clung nearer to him. He held her close, and kissed her softly, gently. It was such peace and heavenly freedom, just to fold her and kiss her gently. Soon she drew away, put on her hat and went home.

The next day he felt wistful and yearning. He knew he did not want *a further sensual experience*, something deeper, darker, than ordinary life could give. He recalled a small statue he had seen at Halliday's so often—a tall, slim, elegant figure from West Africa. It was a woman. "He remembered her vividly : *she was one of his soul's inmates*. Her body was long and elegant, her face

was crushed tiny like a beetle's ; her short ugly legs supported her heavy buttocks, below her slim long loins. 'She knew what he himself did not know. She had thousands of years of purely sensual, purely unspiritual knowledge behind her. It must have been thousand of years since her race had died ; that is, since the relation between the senses and the outspoken mind had broken...... Thousands of years ago that which was imminent in himself must have taken place in these Africans : the goodness, the holiness, the desire for creation and productive happiness must have lapsed, leaving the single impulse for knowledge in one sort, *mindless progressive knowledge through the senses*—mystic knowledge in disintegration and dissolution, *knowledge such as the beetles have*, which live purely within the world of corruption and cold dissolution.

He realized now that this is a long process—thousands of years it takes, after the death of the creative spirit. He realized that there were great mysteries to be unsealed, sensual, mindless, dreadful mysteries, far *beyond the phallic cult*'. The curious unexpected heavy buttocks of the female was a symbol of an experience far beyond the phallic knowledge.

In the case of the white races a reverse process will take place. "The white races, having the Arctic north behind them, the vast abstraction of ice and snow, would fulfil a mystery of *ice-destructive, knowledge*, snow-abstract annihilation." Birkin thought of Gerald. "He was one of these strange white wonderful demons from the north, fulfilled in the destructive frost mystery. And was he fated to pass away in this knowledge—death by perfect cold ?"

Suddenly he remembered there was another way : "There was the paradisal entry into pure single being—a lovely state of free proud singleness, which accepts the obligation of the permanent connection with others, and with the other, submits to the yoke and leash of love, but never forfeits its own proud, individual single ness". He thought of Ursula and decided to go to her and propose. He reached her home and met her father, she being absent, and broached the matter to him. The man was splenetic and complained about the wilfulness of his daughter. When Ursula arrived home Birkin proposed in the presence of her father and the latter urged her to accept it. This annoyed Ursula and she replied that she could not be bullied into acceptance and must have time to think over it. Birkin saw the force in her argument and left the place at once. After his departure the atmosphere in her family was filled with tension in which the intimacy between the sisters was deepened. Birkin was frankly discussed and Gudrun, while she recognized the rich spring of life in him, was cirtical of his force of violence by which he wanted to influence others, while refusing to appreciate their point of view. Ursula "went on, with the discord, jarring and jolting through her, in the most barrren misery." Gradually, however, a revulsion set in her against Gudrun's point of view. She turned in spirit towards Birkin again. She was aware of the

sincerity behind his proposal. "She was not at all sure that it was his mutual union in separateness she wanted. She wanted unspeakable intimacies—to drink him down like life-draught. She made great professions, to herself, of her willingness to warm his footsoles between her breasts, after the fashion of the nauseous Meredith poem. But only on condition that he, her lover, loved her absolutely, with complete self-abandon. He knew he would never abandon himself finally to her. It was her challenge. She was prepared to fight him for it. For she believed in absolute surrender to love. She believed that love far surpassed the individual." Contrary to his philosophy of the singleness of the self balancing another self, she believed that love was everything. 'Man must render himself up to her. He must be quaffed to the dregs by her. Let him be her man utterly, and she in return would be his humble slave'.

Chapter 20—Gladiatorial

After the fiasco of his proposal Birkin had hurried away from Beldover, in a whirl of fury He was deeply angry at Ursula's intransigence. He went straight to Gerald and found him standing in the library like a restless, hollow man. He was feeling bored and at the sight of Birkin his face lit up with a smile. He told him that he had just come to the core of the conclusion that the company of somebody was necessary to take the edge off one's being alone. It might be a woman, or failing that an amusing man. In course of the conversation Birkin told him that he learnt the Japanese style of wrestling known as jiu—jitsu and he wanted to teach him that. Gerald agreed, closed the door and they stripped themselved naked. Birkin was tall and narrow, his bones were thin and fine. Gerald was much heavier and more plastic. He had a rich frictional kind of strength, rather mechanical, but sudden and invincible, whereas Birkin was abstract and almost intangible. He impinged invisibly on the other man, scarcely seeming to touch him, and then suddenly piercing in a tense fine grip that seemed to penetrate into the very quick of Gerald's being. It was as if Birkin's whole physical intelligence interpenetrated into Gerald's body, as if his fine, sublimated energy entered into the flesh of the fuller man, like some potency, casting a fine net, a prison, through the muscles into the very depths of Gerald's physical being".

They wrestled for some time till they were exhausted and lay still on the ground, oblivious of the world outside. At last Gerald spoke, "I could have thrown you, using violence, but you beat me right enough. It suprised me what strength you've got. Almost supernatural'. Their hands closed automatically in a strong warm clash and they gradually came to full consciousness. They sat in silence which was meaningful, and at last Birkin said, "We are men-

tally, spiritually intimate, therefore we should be more or less physically intimate, too,—it is more whole". Then Birkin informed him of his proposal to Ursula, and her reluctance to accept it. But he would propose again, Gerald evinced great pleasure, but added, "I have never felt it myself, not what I should call love. I've gone after women—and been keen enough over some of them. But I've never felt *love*—not love, you understand my meaning ? I mean, at any rate, something abiding, something that can't change'.

Chapter 21—Threshold

Gudrun was away in London and her pupil wrote to inform her that very soon they would be getting a studio to live the free life of an artist. Gudrun decided to return and settle at Shortlands and live with Winifred. On her arrival she was very warmly received by the girl, and 'she was blinded for a moment with pleasure'. Then her eyes, strange and flaming, rested on Gerald, who winced under their light. She was revealed beyond bearing to his eyes. He turned his face aside and felt he would not be able to avert her. He writhed under the imprisonment. His father, however, was delighted and assured Gudrun that he would make her stay there worthwhile to her.

One day Gudrun drove with Gerald and Winifred when the subject of the old man's imminent death was broached by Gerald. The girl, however, added emphatically that her father would not die. She made herself busy with her play, and Gudrun was left with Gerald to comment on the attitude of the girl towards death. They agreed that 'it is better to dance than to wail'—"And they both felt the subterranean desire to let go, to fling away everything and lapse into a sheer unrestraint, brutal and licentious. A strange black passion surged up pure in Gudrun. She felt strong, as if she would tear the world asunder with her hand. She remembered the abandoments of Roman licence, and her heart grew hot. Ah, if that which was unknown and suppressed in her were once let loose, what an orgiastic and satisfying event it would be. And she wanted it ; she trembled slightly at the promixity of the man who stood just behind her, suggestive of the same black licentiousness". At this point Birkin happened to cross their path, and Gerald asked if they should congratulate him, and then turning to Gudrun he said that Ursula and Birkin were going to be engaged. Gudrun was not ready to believe, though she ventured to say, 'naturally' she's a bird that prefers the bush'. Birkin replied, in a playful, but firm tone, "And I want a binding contract and am not keen on love, on free love". They talked on and Gudrun added, "Marriage is a social arrangement, I take it, and has nothing to do with love. There is such a thing as two people being in love for the whole of

their lives—perhaps. But marriage is neither here nor there'. Gerald agreed and they began to chaff at Birkin's idea of love, permanent and unchangeable with one woman. They both believed in love, in a real *abandon*, if one is capable of it.

As Birkin drove away 'he felt a creeping of the spine as if somebody were hammering his neck'.

Chapter 22—Woman to Woman

The chapter describes a little tea party at Birkin's residence in town to which Ursula was invited along with Gerald and Gudrun. Ursula reached there and was surprised to find Hermione, who arrived first. She resented Hermione's long grave face, which had something of the stupidity and the unenlightened self-esteem of a horse in it. It did seem as if, like the moon she had only one side to her penny. She started out all the time on the narrow, but to her, complete world of the extant consciousness. In the life of thought, of the spirit she was one of the elect. But there was a devastating cynicsm at the bottom of her. She was a priestess, without belief, without conviction, suckled in a creed outworn. In the last resort, she believed in Mammon, the flesh and the devil. She was a leaf of the old great tree of knowledge that was withering now.

Hermione enquired if she and Birkin were going to marry, and Ursula replied that Birkin was keen on it, but she was not quite sure of herself, because she was not yet able to understand the nature of love he wants from her, because he is so changeable and self-contradictory : "He wants me to accept him as—as an absolute—But it seems to me he does'nt want to give anything. He wants me to sink myself, not to have any being of my own'. 'Hermione would have been his slave—there was in her a horrible desire to prostrate herself before a man—a man who worshipped her, however, and admitted her as a supreme being'. The woman in her now spoke to Ursula, dissuading her from marrying a man like Birkin : 'I think you need a man, soldierly, strong-willed—a man physically strong and virile, not a senitive man. And you see Rupert is not this. He is frail in health and body, he needs great, great care. Then he is so changeable and unsure of himself—it requires the greatest patience and understanding to help him. I can't speak of what I have been through with him. We have been together so long, I really do know him. And I feel I must say it ; I feel it would be perfectly disastrous for you to marry him. He is so uncertain, so unstable. And one must be willing to suffer for him hourly, daily". Ursula returned sharply, 'And I don't want to suffer hourly and daily. I don't, I should be ashamed. I think it is degrading not to be happy'. Hermione reflected for a moment and then resumed her counselling. "I think you are vital and young—it isn't a question of years or

even of experience—it is almost a question of race—and you seem to be young, you come from a young, inexperienced race".

Ursula was filled with deep resentment and said these words to herself, addressing, as it were, her adversary, silently : "It isn't true. It is you who want a physically strong, bullying man, not I—an unsensitive man, not I. You don't know anything about Rupert, in spite of years you have had with him. You don't give him a woman's love. What is the good of your talking about love—you untrue spectre of a woman. You don't believe in yourself and your own womanhood, so what good is your conceited shallow cleverness !"

The two women sat in antagonistic silence. Hermione was thinking of the vulgarity of the brainless woman before her and the stupidity of Rupert's infatuation for her. She was anxious about that perverse changing man lest his oscillation between physical and spiritual love should prove too violent for coherency. They sat on till Birkin put in his appearance and at once smelt the tension in the atmosphere. He assumed a bluff manner and began to talk of the tea-party to which Gerald and Gudrun also were invited. He was trying impartially to cheer up both of them which exasperated Ursula. It was when Hermione referred to her visit to Florence in winter and began to praise Italy and the Italians that he decided to snub her by berating that country and her people. Poor Ursula felt extremely miserable in that atmosphere of growing tension. Meanwhile Birkin rang for the tea, and when it was brought and Hermione began to help Birkin in arranging the cups, Ursula realized the fact that she was an outsider and did not share their convention, their standard and their grace of an established culture. The simple way Hermione assumed her rights in Birkin's room maddened Ursula and discouraged her profoundly. She got up suddenly and offered to go home in a tone which had finality about it. When she got outside the house she ran down the road in fury and agitation. The unreasoning rage and violence Hermione aroused in her by her mere presence in Birkin's room left no room for reflection on her own uncouth and ill-bred behaviour with that conceited lady.

Chapter 23—Excurse

Next day Birkin met Ursula and asked her to drive with him in the afternoon. The latter accepted the proposal with an unresponsive face. He himself looked tired and indifferent towards his life and connections, yet the old desire for a serious living still had him in its grips. Then he showed her three rings which, he said, he had bought for her. Ursula liked them, but told him rather sharply that he should give them to Hermione because he belonged to her. He was silent and Ursula had the rings still in her

hand and secretly tried them and her finger. Only the opal, with its thin wire loop, would go on her ring finger. She told Birkin that opal was unlucky, and he replied that he preferred unlucky things. Ursula was plunged into thought. She knew that, in accepting the rings she was accepting a pledge. Yet fate seemed more than herself. She was glad that he bought them for her and made no secret of her pleasure. Birkin was delighted, but he was indifferent at the bottom of his soul : "There were depths of passion when one became impersonal and unemotional, whereas Ursula was still at the emotional, personal level. *He had tahen her at the roots of darkness and shame-like a demon, laughing at the fountain of mystic corruption which was one of the sources of her being*—laughing, shrugging, accepting finally. As for her, when would she so much go beyond herself as to accept him at the quick of death ?"

Ursula was very happy and began to talk of people and their motives, but Birkin was not much interested now in people and personalities, and told her that people were nowadays enclosed in a definite limitation : none of them transcended the given terms. Ursula did not agree, yet there was 'an underspace in her where she did not care for people and their idiosyncrasies'. She became silent and desired that they should remain together till darkness. But Birkin informed her that he had promised to be at Shortland for dinner. Hermione was to be there ; she would be leaving soon and he wanted to say good-bye to her, as he would never see her again. Ursula assured him that she did not mind it at all. He was free to go where he belonged. He caught the undercurrent of jealousy in her tone and reminded her sharply that it was all finished between himself and Hermione and, as a matter of fact, it is she who belonged to her ; she was in opposition to her and was, therefore, her counterpart. But Ursula told him passionately that he could not deceive her by his word-twisting and that he really belonged to Hermione and her dead show, and was nothing to her. Birkin was inflamed and frankly told her that even though his long connection with Hermione was wrong—a deathly process, yet he could not forget common decency of human behaviour. But she would tear his soul by her jealousy at the very mention of Hermione. Ursula lost her temper and exploded : "You are mistaken if you think that : I am not jealous of Hermione. She is nothing to me. No, it's you who are a liar. It's you who must return, like a dog to his vomit. It is what Hermione stands for that *I hate*. It is his, it is false, it is death. You belong to that old, deathly way of living—then go back to it. But don't come to me, for I've nothing to do with it." Birkin muttered that she was a fool and Ursula retorted that she was indeed a big fool to swallow his cleverness. "He must go to his women, his spiritual brides. They are not common and fleshly enough to satisfy his body so he comes to her. She knows his dirty, little game very well. A flame ran over her face and she stamped her foot madly and went on, "yes I am not spiritual like Hermione. Then *go* to her, that's all I say, *go*. Ha, *she* spiritual ?

A dirty materialist as she is ! I tell you it's *dirt*, *dirt*, nothing but *dirt*. And it's *dirt* you want. In her soul she's a devilish unbeliever, common as dirt. Do you think I do not know the foulness of your sex-life—and hers ? I do. And it's that foulness you want, you liar." As she turned away Birkin said, half-pathetically : 'This is a degrading exhibition'. And again the flash came over her as she rejoined bitingly. "You, you truth-lover ! You purity monger ! It *stinks*, your truth and your purity. It stinks of the offal you feed on, you scavenger dog, you eater of corpses......What you are is a foul, deathly thing, obscene and perverse."

Birkin was partly in agreement with her and said in a calm but firm tone : 'It may all be true, lies and stink and all. But Hermione's spiritual intimacy is no rottener than your emotional—jealous intimacy. One can preserve the decencies, even to one's enemies ; for one's own sake. Hermione is my enemy—to her last breath ! That's why I must bow her off the place.' But Ursula was not prepared to relent she went on calling him 'a false liar, a whited sepulche'. She took out the rings and flung them in his face. With this she walked away. A darkness came over his face. He felt tired and weak. He sat down and reflected. Ursula was right. He knew that his spirituality was concomitant of a process of depravity, a sort of pleasure in self-destruction. But Ursula's emotional intimacy was no better —"Fusion, fusion, this horrible fusion of two beings, which every woman and most men insisted on, was it not nauseous and horrible ?

Hermione saw herself as a Perfect Idea, to which all men must come : and Ursula was the perfect Womb, the bath of birth ! And both were horrible. He saw the rings lying on the muddy ground and picked them up as tokens of the reality of beauty, of happiness in warm creation. There was a darkness over his mind and a point of anxiety in his heart now. He wanted her to come back. When he saw her coming back, he was at peace, as if slumbering and utterly relaxed. She came up, and stood before with a flower in her hand, which she offered him. Gradually his heart was filled with a hot passion of tenderness for her. He put his arms round her, and she hid her face on his shoulder. Tension yielded place to peace ; she looked up at him and the wonderful yellow light in her eyes was now soft and yielded. They resumed their lovers' talk and tender caress and felt happy. She wished he were passionate, because in passion she was at home. But this was so still and frail. She took out the rings from his pocket and they drifted sweetly and peacefully. He was enveloped in a new conciousnes, like a thing that is born, like a bird when it comes out of an egg. They strolled down a long hill till they reached the churh known as South Well Minster where Ursula's parents were married. Ursula was transformed : New eyes were opened in her soul ; she saw Birkin as one of the sons of God who saw and loved the daughters of men. Kneeling down before him she put her arms round his loins

and her face against his thighs. She was overwhelmed with a sense of a heavenful of riches. Unconsciously, with her sensitive finger tips, she was tracing the back of his thighs, following some mysterious life-flow there. Her face was now one dazzle of released golden light, as she looked up at him and laid her hands full on his thighs, behind. He looked down at her with a rich bright brow as if she were a paradisal flower, beyond womanhood. A living fire ran through her, from him, a dark flood of electric passion : that flooded them both with rich passion, satisfaction. They were interlocked and overtaken with a swoon, but they were flooded with the marvellous fullness of immediate gratification. He stood there in his strange full body that had its marvellous fountains, like the bodies of the sons of God......She had thought there was no source deeper than the phallic source, but now she experienced floods of ineffable darkness, ineffable riches from his flanks and thighs.

They proceeded to take their meal, at which they discussed their future. Ursula was in favour of a settled life at the Mill, opposed to restless wandering. But Birkin said, 'I should like to go with you nowhere, just to no where. One wants to wander away from the world's somewhere, into our own nowhere !' There's somewhere where we can be free—somewhere where one need not wear much clothes—none even—where you can be yourself, without bothering. Ursula was content with her possession of him, so utterly and intolerably that she herself lapsed out ! They decided never to go apart again and to resign their jobs then and there. Then they sat in the car to go back. She knew there was no leaving him. Besides, she had a full mystic knowledge of his suave loins of darkness, and in this knowledge there was an inevitability and beauty of fate, fate which one asks for, which one accepts in full. They were wrapped in darkness, conscious, but conscious of nothing. But she would touch him, touch the reality in him—reality of his loins of darkness. And he too waited in the magical steadfastness of suspense for her to take this knowledge of him as he had taken the knowledge of her. He stopped the car in the wood, the lights were put out.

"They threw off their clothes, and he gathered her to him and found the pure lambent reality of her for ever invisible flesh. Quenched, inhuman, his fingers upon her unrevealed nudity were the fingers of silence upon silence, the body of mysterious night upon the body of mysterious night......only known as a palpable revelation of living otherness. She had the desire of him, she received the maximum of unspeakable communion in touch, dark, subtle, positively silent, a magnificent gift and give again, a mystery ......vital sensual reality that can never be transmuted into the mind content'. They slept the chilly night through under the hood of the car, a night of unbroken sleep. It was already high day when they awoke. They looked at each other and laughed, then looked away, filled with darkness and secrecy. Then they kissed and

remembered the magnificence of the night. It was so magnificent, such an inheritance of a universe of dark reality, that they hid away its remembrance and knowledge.

Chapter 24—Death and Love

Thomas Crich was dying slowly, terribly slowely. Gerald went often to his room, but always found him in the same state of suspended animation. And every time his dark, inchoate eyes turned to him, there passed through Gerald's body a burning streak of revolt, threatening to break his mind with a clangour. Gradually he was filled with unspeakable fear. He was afraid of some horrible collapse in him. He went about all day with a tendency to cringe, as if there were the point of a sword of Damocles pricking the nape of his neck. It was a trial by ordeal, but Gerald would exerience the whole process of slow death without wincing or flinching. Yet in the stress of this ordeal he lost his hold on the outer, daily life. Work, pleasure—it was all left behind. The real activity was this ghastly wrestling with death in his soul. But as the fight went on, and all that he was and had been continued to be destroyed, so that the life was a hollow shell round him, he knew he would have to find reinforcement, otherwise he would collapse inward upon the dark void which circled at the centre of his soul.

In this extremity his instinct led him to Gudrun and he threw away everything now in order to establish his relation with her. She felt him following her like a doom. She held away from him, yet she knew he drew always nearer and nearer.

She was very much attracted by him. His strange, blank silences moved her to an almost reverential attitude. She felt almost mesmerized by him. One day he opened out his heart to her and sought her help and sympathy as there was none else to relieve him of his burden. She was caught in a strange snare.

In the evening he accompanied her as she walked homeward. He was burning with desire to embrace her in order to recover his balance. 'Blind to her, and thinking only of himself, he slippd his arm softly round her waist and drew her to him. Her heart fainted, feeling herself taken. She died a little death, and was drawn against him as they walked down the stormy darkness. So, suddenly, he was liberated and perfect, strong heroic. The warmth and motion of her walk suffused through him wonderfully. She drifted along in a wonderful interfusion of physical motion till they reached the vicinity of Beldover. He declared his love again : she exulted, but did not fully believe him. He pleaded passionately ; "I couldn't bear to be one ; My brain would burst". They were walking und— the dark bridge where, she remembered, the colliers waited for their sweet hearts. They came to a stand still and he lifted her into

breast, 'His body vibrated, taut and powerful as he closed upon her and crushed her, breathless and dazed and destroyed. She felt she would swoon, die under the vibrating unhuman tension of his arms and body. He lifted her, and seemed to pour her into himself like wine into a cup." She was all slack and flowing into him, melting and melting into his limbs and bones. She looked up and saw his male, shapely face above her, with a white aura, as if he were a visitor from the unseen. She wanted to touch him, touch him, touch him, till she had him all in her hands. Ah, if she could have the precious *knowing* of him, she would be filled. But she knew now, and it was enough. For the time, her exquisite soul was destroyed with the shock of his invisible fluid lightning'.

They came at length to the gate of the drive and parted cordially. Gerald went home full of the strength and the power of living desire : Gudrun stayed home for a couple of days lest Gerald should think that she was easy to win. Meanwhile his father died and she was anxious to be by Gerald's side to console him. But Gerald was crushed with the terrible sense of loneliness. He was suspended on the edge of a void writhing. As the evening of the third day came on, his heart rang with fear. He could not bear another night. He did not believe in his own single self any further : he needed reinforcement. He got up, pulled on his boots and set out to walk in the night. He wandered mcehanically on till he entered the churchyard. He stood beside his father's grave and felt the clay beneath, cold, unclean and sticky. He shrank back in revulsion as if some of the clay were sticking to his heart. Then he remembered Gudrun and resolved desperately to go to her, to meet her in her room. He resumed his walk, reached the house, groped his way up the dark stairs, heard the sisters talking, and at last knowing that she was alone in her room, he entered silently. She lay in her bed and opened her eyes and was amazed to find him standing still. He was inevitable as a supernatural being. She knew there was something fatal in the situation, and she must accept it. Yet she must challenge him. But his face was too wonderful and fascinating and it cast a spell on her. He stood gazing into her eyes in the lighted room and her resistance melted away. He stripped himself and held her in his close grasp. He found in her an infinite relief : "Into her he poured all his pent-up darkness and corrosive death, and he was whole again. And she, subject, received him as a vessel filled with his bitter potion of death. As he drew near to her, he plunged deeper into her enveloping soft warmth, a wonderful creative heat that penetrated his veins and gave him life again. He felt his limbs growing fuller and flexible with life, his body gained an unknown strength. And he was a child, so soothed and restored, perfect as if he were bathed in the womb again". Like a child at the breast, he cleaved intensely to her, and she could not put him away. He felt the full, unutterable sleep coming over him, the sleep of complete exhaustion and restoration".

But Gudrun lay wide awake, destroyed into perfect conscious-

ness. She disengaged herself softly and rose up a little to look at him : 'But he was far off, in another world. Here was she, left with all the anguish of consciousness, while he was sunk deep into the other element of mindless, remote, living show-gleam......They would never be together. But she felt overwhelming tenderness for him, and a dark under stirring of jealous hatred, that he should lie so perfect and immune, whilst she was tormented with violent wakefulness. She was waiting for the morning when she would be released from his awful juxtaposition. At last she woke him up and he began to dress. His socks and boots were sodden with mud and he had to go down with his dirty boots in hand. As she was left alone a great weight fell off her. And excited, worn out, yet still satisfied, she fell soon into deep, heavy sleep. Meanwhile Gerald was moving homeward, still and thoughtless, like a still pool, and his body full, and warm and rich. He was replete with greatful self-sufficiency.

Chapter 25—Marriage or Not

The Brangwen family was going to move from Beldover into the town. Birkin had procured a marriage licence, yet Ursula was postponing from day to day the fixation of the marriage date. Gerald waited for their marriage as something crucial to him. He was half-inclined to marry Gudrun at the same time. The two men met and discussed the ethic of marriage. Birkin was not enthusiastic about marriage—not in legal marriage, which was to him only a matter of convenience.

Gerald said, "No matter how one regards legal marriage, yet to enter into married state, in one's own personal instance is final" —For Birkin marriage in the old sense was repulsive ; "It's a sort of tacit hunting in couples each couple in its own little house, watching its own little interest, and stewing in its own little privacy". He went on : "One should avoid this home instinct ; it's a habit of cowardliness, I want a permanent union between man and woman, but it's not the last word, you have to take down the love-and-marriage ideal from its pedestal. We want something broader. I believe in the additional perfect relationship between man and man'. But Gerald was not able to feel any warmth about it. 'He was ready to be doomed. Marriage was like a doom for him, a seal of his condemnation. But he won't take any pure relationship with any other soul. Marriage was not the committing of himself into relationship with Gudrun. It was a committing of himself in acceptance of the established order, in which he did not believe, and then he would retreat to the underworld for his life. The other way was to accept the offer of Birkin for pure relationship between man and man which might enable him later to pledge himself with the woman, not merely in legal marriage, but in

absolute mystic marriage. Yet he would not accept the offer, even though he felt elated at the thought of it.

Chapter 26—A Chair

One Monday afternoon Ursula and Birkin strayed into the jumble market in the Town to see if they could buy any piece of furniture. There was quite a crowd which superficially thrilled Ursula. She excitedly watched a young woman, in advanced pregnancy, turning over a mattress and trying to arouse the interest of a young man who looked dejected and down-at-heel. He was going to marry her because she was carrying his child in her womb. She was bargaining with the old shopkeeper and handling the article with desperate interest. Birkin was interested in an old chair which must have been once a fine piece of art. It reminded him of Jane Austen's England, when men had living thought to unfold and pure happiness in unfolding them. But now they have no real production, only sordid and foul mechanicalness. Ursula contradicted him hotly, 'I hate your past. I'm sick of it. I hate the present, but I don't want the past to take its place'. She refused to buy the old chair and they decided to have no furniture at all. Birkin went so far as to say that they should give up their home and should have no fixed abode. But they had to dispose of the chair somehow and Ursula proposed that they should give it to the woman, who was still there with her young man. She proceeded rather nervously to the couple and made the offer of the chair. She was attracted by the youngman, a still, mindless creature, hardly a man at all : he had some of the fineness and stillness and silkiness of a dark-eyed silent rat. The two couples talked of marriage and its propects in a light bantering way, at the end of which the offer was gratefully accepted and Birkin with Ursula turned about to leave the place. Seated in the tram they began to talk about their life after marriage ; a life of perpetual motion and bereft of all connections ; Birkin slyly hinted at the necessity of other relationship but Ursula told him sharply as to why he should seek the love of other people who had got her as his permanent and constant partner. Birkin faltered yet added wisfully that he was anxious to complete his union with her by establishing an extra human relationship with Gerald, Ursula only looked at him with her strange bright eyes.

Chapter 27—Flitting

That evening, Ursula returned home very bright-eyed and happy-which irritated her people. Her father came home at supper time tired after the evening class. Gudrun was reading, and the

mother sat in silence. Suddenly she announced that Rupert and she were going to be married the very next day. Her mother complained that she kept it secret from them, but Ursula retorted that they knew it. This enraged her father, who shouted in obscene fury, 'why, does any boay know anything about *you*, *you* shifty bitch !' Gudrun flushed deep in violent remonstrance, but she addressed her sister : 'But isn't it a *fearfully* sudden decision, Ursula ?" And the latter replied. "He's been wanting me to agree for weeks. Only I was not ready in myself, Now I am ready ; Her father now took the thread of the talk in his hand and taunted Ursula with obstinacy and self-centeredness, while the girl returned unfalteringly that he had always tried to bully her. Hardly was the word uttered before the man's blow fell on her face and sent her up against the door.

But Ursula repeated the charge with tearful eyes, and before her father could reach her she had flashed out of the door. She re-appeared shortly before them in full dress and told them that she was going. In the next instance the door closed and Ursula was gone. She walked on the darkness, weeping bitterly like a child till she reached the house of Birkin. He was surprised to see her and she related to him the entire episode, complaining bitterly about the father's behaviour all through her stay with him.

Clouds lifted from her face as she found herself in the arms of Birkin : "Now, washed all clean by her tears, she was new, and frail like a flower just folded. She was so new, so wonderful, so undimmed. And he was so old, so steeped in heavy memories. Her soul was new, undefined and glimmering with the unseen. And his soul was dark and gloomy, it had only one grain of living hope, like a grain of mustard seed. But this one living grain in him matched the perfect youth in her. He worshipped her as age worships youth ; he gloried in her because, in his one grain of faith, he was young as she, he was her proper mate. This marriage with her was his resurrection and his life. It was something beyond love, such a gladness of having surpassed oneself, of having transcended the old existence. "In this new, superfine bliss, a peace surpassing knowledge there was not *I* and *you*, there was only the third, unrealized wonder, the wonder of not existing as oneself, but in a consummation of my being and her being in a new, paradisal unit regained from the duality, where everything is silent, because there is nothing to answer, all is perfect and at one. In the perfect one there is perfect silence of bliss".

They were married on the next day and she wrote to her father and mother. She stayed with her husband and did not see anybody, save Gudrun and Gerald. One afternoon Gerald sat talking with her about her happiness and that of her husband, and she suggested, with a touch of constraint, that he should marry Gudrun to share the same happiness, though Gudrun was not simple and open like herself. One does not know her in five minutes. Gerald said tentatively

that he was going to ask her, in any case, to go away with him at Christmas—a sort of honeymoon before marriage. And he would be asking her and Birkin also to join them. Birkin came in a little later and Ursula told him what had been said.

"Gudrun", exclaimed Birkin, "is a born mistress, just as Gerald is a born lover. If somebody says all the women are either wives or mistresses, then Gudrun is a mistress".

It was two days after that Ursula was to go to fetch her things from the house in Beldover, which her parents had left. She and Gudrun went to the place collected the things and waited for Birkin. They began to talk of their parents and their sordid married life and Gudrun spoke bitterly about the cheerlessness of common marriages : "There may be, and there are, thousands of women who want it, and chuld conceive of nothing else. But the very thought of it sends me mad. One must be free, above all : one may forfeit everything else. To marry, one must have a freelance or nothing, a comrade-in-arms". They were interrupted by the sound of horn. Birkin had come to take them and the things. As they moved in the car Gudrun almost felt envious of Ursula's fortune : "Life for her was so quick, and an open door—so reckless as if not only this world, but the world that was gone and the world to come were nothing to her. Ah, if she could be *just like that*, it would be perfect". She began to reflect on marriage, the wonderful stability of marriage. Yet her mouth gave a little grimace. She thought of Gerald and Shortlands—marriage and the home ! He meant a great deal to her—but ! Perhaps it was not in her to marry. At last she got down and parted company. She stood to watch the car moving into the distance, and as she proceeded to her strange house, her heart was filled with incomprehensible bitterness.

Next afternoon she went to her sister and found her alone and radiantly happy. 'She always envied, almost with resentment, the strange, positive fullness that subsided in the atmosphere around Ursula and Birkin, Ursula wanted to know if Gudrun was aware of the fact that Gerald wanted them all to go away at Christmas. Gudrun was silent : she had a keen sense of insult at the liberty taken by Gerald with her freedom. She opened her mind to Ursula ; her eyes flashed and her soft face flushed with sulleness. Ursula looked on and was frightened. Ursula tried hard to pacify her, by stressing the fact that Gerald was perfectly simple and direct, and' therefore, brave. She further told her that Gerald proposed to take them to Tyrole, where he used to go when he was in Germany. A lovely place for sport.

Chapter 28—Gudrun in the Pompadour

Christmas drew near ; all four prepared for flight. All were happy. Gudrun was very much excited. She loved to be on the wing. She and Gerald being ready first, set off via London and Paris to Innsbruck, where they would meet Birkin and Ursula. In London they stayed one night. They went to the music hall, and afterwards to the Cafe. Gudrun hated the Cafe yet always went back to it. It was as if she *had* to return to this small, slow, central whirl pool of disintegration and dissolution : just to give it a look. She sat there with Gerald staring at the various groups of people at the tables. "And it gave her pleasure to sit there, cheeks flushed, eyes black and sullen, seeing them all objectively, as put away from her, like creatures in some menagerie of apish degraded soul." Halliday and his party were there, urging Minette to something. At last she rose, moved to Gerald and began to chat familiarily with him. In the end she glanced at Gudrun and inquired of Gerald mockingly, "Are you having a good time ?" As she left him Gudrun was informed by Gerald that the girl was known to him, and she knew at once that she was one of his mistresses.

Halliday and his party were tipsy and hilàrious and they were discussing Birkin loudly. They were repeating certain sentences from some letter to Halliday written by him : "There is a phase in every race when the desire for destruction overcomes every other desire. In the individual, this desire is ultimately a desire for destruction of self. And in the great retrogression, the reducing back of the created body of life, we get knowledge, and beyond knowledge, the phosphorescent ecstasy of acute sensation......But, Julius there is in you, somewhere, the living desire for positive creation......when all this process of active corruption, with all its flowers of mud, is transcended."

Gudrun was in a towering rage at this obscene mockery of Birkin who was not present there. She got up with Gerald, went to Halliday's table, and wanted to have a look at the letter. As the letter was handed to her she turned with it and walked out of the Cafe, in her measured fashion. It was when she had gone out that a hubbub arose in the company and they began to hoot and jeer at Gudrun. But she had stepped into the taxi with Gerald whom she told about what she had done, and expressed hot resentment against them. "I feel I could never see this foul town again—I couldn't bear to come back to it'.

Chapter 29—Continental

Ursula and Birkin took ship at Dover and set sail for Ostend. They almost spent the cold and dark night on the deck, under the same rug, and so close to each other that they seemed to have be-

come one. "In the midst of this profound darkness there seemed to glow on her heart the effulgence of a paradise unknown and unrealised. In her transport she lifted her face suddenly to him, and he touched it with his lip......it was like a flower that grows near the surf. But he did not know this ecstasy of foreknowledge. He appeared to be falling through a gulf of infinite darkness like an unlit star. Yet his soul was perfectly at peace. Then they disembarked in the darkness, entrained, and rushed through the desolate darkness, pierced occasionally by the lights at stations where the train stopped. They came at last to Basle, to the hotel. It was all drifting trance for Ursula, who was not at ease till they were in the train again. They reached Innsbruck, deep in snow and evening, and drove to the hotel, glowing in the distance with its golden light.

As they reached the Hotel Ursula ran up the staircase to meet Gudrun who was pleasantly surprised to see her a day earlier than expected. Gerald was out and the sisters ran down to exchange notes. Gudrun told her of her experiences at the cafe and mentioned Birkin's letter which was still in her possession. Then she began to relate her experiences of the party in Fanny Bath's studio where Gerald was in his best element : "He came out like a dandelion in the sun. He's a whole saturnalia in himself once he is roused. Really, Ursula, he seems to reap the women like a harvest. There wasn't one that would have resisted him." Gudrun's eyes were flashing, her check was hot, she looked strange, static, satiric. Ursula was fascinated at once—yet uneasy. They went to dinner, all the four of them and seemed to be elated at the new place, away from England, where the damper is never lifted off one, as Gudrun put it. "Is n't it marvellous', said Gudrun, "to be out of one's country. I cannot believe myself. I am so transported, the moment I set foot upon a foreign land. I say to myself, 'Here steps a new creature into life'. Birkin replied to Gerald's remark that they all loved England still : "But it's a damnably uncomfortable love like a love for an aged parent who suffers horribly from a complication of diseases, from which there is no hope'. Any hope of England's being real ? God knows. It's a great actual unreality now. It might be real, if there were no English men. They say a lice crawls off a dead body. So I leave England'.

The next day they proceeded into the depth of that snow-covered region. It was a silence and a sheer whiteness exhilarating to madness. But the perfect silence was most terrifying, isolating the soul, surrounding the heart with frozen air. Gudrun was fascinated and looked into the eyes of Gerald with a strange, meaning look.

"A fierce electric energy seemed to flow all over his limbs ; his muscles were surcharged, his hands felt hard with strength : He and she were separate, like the opposite poles of fierce energy. But they felt powerful enough to leap over the confines of life into the forbidden places, and back again." They came to the white,

half-buried building of the inn along with other sledges. Gerald and Gudrun went up to their bed-room and Gudrun was bewitched by the icy landscape outside her window. It filled Gudrun with a strange rapture. She crouched in front of the window, clenching her face in her hands, in a sort of trance. At last she folded her vesture and settled down like a crystal in the navel of the snow and was gone'. Gerald bent above her, but already he felt she was completely gone and there was icy vapour round his heart. He saw the blind valley, the great cul-de-sac of snow and mountain peak. And there was no way out. He wanted to arouse Gudrun, but she only averted her soft, mute face, a little from his gaze. Quite suddenly, he put his hand under her chin and lifted up her face to him. They looked at him through their tears in terror. Her lips parted as she breathed with difficulty. "A passion came up in him, stroke after stroke, like the ringing of the bronze bell, so strong and unflawed and indomitable. His hands were living metal : his heart rang like a bell clanging inside him. He lifted her close and folded her against him. She was soft and inert, in a swoon of fascination : he was superhuman, as if invested with a supernatural force. His bronze-like limbs were heavy with desirability that would destroy him, if he were not fulfilled. His heart went up like a flame of ice, he closed over her like steel. He would destroy her rather than be denied. He kissed her lips and eyes ; he wanted some sign, some recognition from her. But she lay silent and child-like and remote.

At last she returned to the everyday world and they went down and found Ursula and Birkin sitting together at the table, waiting for them. To Gudrun they looked like simple children and she felt a twinge of envy in her heart.

There were other people in the place, ten altogether—two artists, three students, a man and wife, and a professor with his two daughters – all Germans. The four English people, being new comers, sat still and watched others. The host came and requested them to come to the *Reunionsaal* to be introduced to the other guests. The little and awkward ceremony of introduction being over they all sat down for the entertainment. The first item was a recitation of Loerke, the artist, a little man with the boyish figure, and a round, full, sensitive-looking head and the quick, full eyes, like a mouse's. His voice was mature, sardonic, its movement had the flexibility of essential energy, and of a mocking, penetrating understanding. Gudrun was spell-bound watching him and his fine adjustment and singleness. All were laughing hilariously.

Then Ursula was prevailed upon to sing 'Annie Lowrie' as the Professor called it. Gudrun accompanied her on the piano. Ursula had a beautiful, ringing voice, and this evening she felt radiantly confident and liberated. "She felt like a bird flying in the air, as her voice soared out, enjoying herself extremely in the balance and flight of her song, like the motion of a bird's wings in the air......

She was dilated and brilliant, like a flower in the morning sun. She felt Birkin looking at her......and her breasts thrilled, her veins were all golden. She was as happy as the sun that has just opened above the clouds, and everybody seemed so admiring and radiant".

After dinner she and Birkin went out to comfort themselves with their warm talks and intimacies. Birkin told her that but for her presence he could not bear the place—the stillness, the cold, the frozen enternality. As they returned Ursula was plunged into the memories of her home and past life. But she hated this remembrance—'why not a bath of pure oblivion, a new birth, without any recollection or blemish of the past life. She knew herself new and unbegotten, she had no father, no mother, no anterior connections ; she belonged only to oneness with Birkin, a oneness that struck deeper notes, sounding into the heart of the universe, the heart of reality, where she had never existed before. Even Gudrun was a separate unit, having nothing to do with this self, in her new world of reality'.

Gudrun and Gerald had walked up the valley straight in front of the house. Gudrun was driven by a strange desire. She wanted to plunge on and on to the end of the valley alone and pass into the infolded navel of the eternal snow to merge herself with the external, infinite silence, the sleeping, timeless, frozen centre of All. When they entered the inn again they found the place resounding with mirth. Everybody was dancing, there was the most boisterous turmoil. The dancing stopped and they all rushed for drink. Loerke was everywhere at once, like a gnome, suggesting drinks for the women, making an obscure, slightly risky joke with men. He wanted very much to dance with Gudrµn and make a connection with her. Instinctively she knhw it, and she waited for him to come up. But the partner of of Loerke, a large, fair, soft youth, humbly requested her to dance with him and she agreed. This exasperated Loerke, and she turned to the German Professor for the second bout. The room was charged with excitement and strong, animal emotion. Gerald was dancing with the younger German miss, who was almost dying of virgin excitement, because she thought him so handsome, so superb. He had her in h s power, a fluttering, flushing, bewildered creature. At the end she was so overcome with the prostrate love for him, that she could scarcely speak sensibly at all. Birkin was dancing with Ursula. There were odd little fires playing in his eyes, he seemed to have turned into something wicked and flickering, mocking, suggestive, quite impossible. Ursula was frightened and fascinated. Clear before her eyes, as in a vision, she could see the sardonic, licentious mockery of his eyes ; he moved towards her with subtle, animal, indifferent approach. He knew all the time what he was doing, she could see it in his smiling, concentrated eyes. Her impulse was to repel him violently, break from his spell of mocking brutishness. But she was too fascinated, she wanted to submit, she wanted to know.

'They might do, as they liked—this she relalized as she went to sleep—then she added, so bestial! so bestial, they two!—so degraded'! She winced. But after all, why not? She exulted as well. She was bestial: How good it was to be shameful'.

Gudrun who had been watching Gerald suddenly thought: 'He should have all the women he can—it is his nature. It is absurd to call him monogamous—he is naturally promiscuous. "The deep resolve formed in her, to combat him. One of them must triumph over the other. Her soul steeled itself with strength. Almost she laughed within herself, at her confidence". She looked at him. He was a phenomenon to her, not a human being: a sort of creature, greedy.

As she stood before the mirror to brush her hair, he followed her and peeped into the glass from behind her. She started and became nervous. She was far, far from being at ease with him. But she knew also that he was completely blind, blind as a wolf looking at her. But she was aware of his frightening, impending figure; his hard, strong, unyielding chest, close upon her back. She felt she could not bear it any more, in a few minutes she would fall down at his feet. But she managed to tide over the crisis, which made her almost fond of him. She longingly referred to the spell he had cast on the German Professor's daughter, and her mockery quivered through his muscles with curious re-echoes. Gerald fell sound asleep, but Gudrun kept awake beside him thinking of his independent will, the revolution he had worked in the mines, his capacity for creating order out of chaos. For a few moments she was borne away on the wild wings of ambition, thinking of the power, wealth and influence she must enjoy as his wife. But as she lay in fictitious transport of false hope, something seemed to snap in her, and a terrible cynicism began to gain upon her. She was not interested in the life of wealth and pomp. The whole coinage of valuation was spurious for her. She hated rich and poor both. Already she mocked at herself for her dreams. She woke him up and greeted him with a mocking, enigmatic smile and he smiled, too, purely unconsciously. She bent down and began to kiss him passionately as if she were eager to feel his very heart, to touch the quick of him.

This morning they were in perfect state of unity. They went out with a Toboggan, leaving Ursula and Birkin to follow. Gudrun, it seemed, passed altogether into the whiteness of the snow; she became a pure, thoughtless crystal. When she reached the top of the slope and looked around at the white, glittering universe, it seemed to her like a garden with the peaks for pure flowers, and her heart gathering them. She had no separate consciousness for Gerald.

The first days passed in an ecstasy of physical motion,—moving in an intensity of speed and white light that surpassed life itself, and carried the souls of human beings beyond into an abstraction

of velocity and weight and eternal, frozen snow. Luckily there came a day cf snow, when they all must stay indoors ; otherwise Birkin said, they would all lose their faculties, and begin to utter themselves in cries and shrieks, like some strange, unknown snow creatures.

It happened in the afternoon that Ursula sat in the *Reunionsal* talking to Loerke. He appeared to be sulky about something and his partner also was kept in some sort of subjection, against which he was rebelling. Gudrun also wanted to talk to him to know his views about art. Besides, his figure attracted her. There was the look of a wastrel about him that intrigued her, and an old man's look that interested her, and uncanny singleness that marked out an artist to her. And she could see in his brown gnome's eyes the black look of inorganic misery which lay behind all his buffoonery. His figure interested her—the figure of a boy, almost a street arab. He made no attempt to conceal it : his legs were thin, and he did not try to disguise the fact. And for all his apparent playfulness he never sought to ingratiate himself with anybody.

This afternoon Gudrun came into the lounge as he sat talking with Ursula. He sat hunched up as if his spirit were bat-like. She went and sat by her sister. He looked at her with a look of unconcern, though, in fact, she interested him deeply. Gudrun was interested to learn that he was making the great granite frieze for a great granite factory at Cologue. The design was the representation of a fair, with peasants and artizans in an orgy of enjoyment, whirling in roundabouts, gaping at shows and rolling in knots—a frenzy of chactic mction. They entered into the discussion of the technicalities and Loerke expounded his philoscphy cf mcdern art.

"As a matter cf fact sculpture is always part of an architectural conception. And since churches are all museum stuff, since industry is our business, let us make our places of industry our art—our factory area our Parthenon............Art should interpret industry, as art once interpreted religion. He went on talking of work and labour, of man serving the machine or enjoying the motion of machine in a fair. They, who have not worked fcr hunger like himself, perhaps do not know what god governs men. Gudrun was fascinated by the talk of that creature in human form and she knew that with his full, submerged and watchful eyes he could look into her and see her, see her secrets. A certain violent sympathy came up in her for this mud-child. Ursula was both attracted and repelled by him. Gerald and Birkin depised him. Birkin explained to Gerald the nature of the attraction that Loerke had for people, especially women : 'He is the perfectly subjected being, existing almost like a criminal. And the women rush towards that, like the current of air towards a vacuum. He has the fascination of pity and repulsion for them, a little obscene monster of the darkness that he is. He lives like a rat in the river of corruption, just where it falls over into the bottomless pit. He is a gnawing little negation, gnawing at the roots of life'.

One day Ursula and Gudrun were shown one of his early works—the statue of a delicate girl naked, sitting sideways on a naked horse, 'a massive, magnificent stallion, rigid with pent-up power'. Ursula objected that the horse of art was quite unlike the sensitive animal that the real horse always is. He replied to her, with a provoking condescension, that the horse was part of a work of art and had no relation to anything outside that work of art. She must not confuse the relative world of action with the absolute world of art. 'The two things are quite and permanently apart'. Ursula was furious and replied with brutal frankness : "The horse is picture of your own stock, stupid brutality, and the girl was a girl you loved and tortured and ignored. As for your world of art and world of reality you have separated the two because you cannot bear to know what you are. The world of art is only the truth about the real world—that's all'. The outburst was resented by Gudrun and deprecated even by Gerald who happened to reach there at that very moment, and Ursula thought it proper to quite them. But the conversation that followed revealed that the girl was really one of his mistresses whom he had to beat into submission to sit as a model ; that he had, by then, lost all interest in her because he was interested in girls below twenty, small, fresh, tender and slight—'After that-let her what she likes, she has nothing for me'.

Ursula went out alone into the world of pure snow. But the dazzling whiteness seemed to beat upon her till it hurt her. Her head felt dazed and numb. Suddenly she remembered that away beyond, below her, lay the dark fruitful earth—a miracle of miracles. She wanted to realize this miracle at once. She wanted to see the dark earth, to smell its earthy fecundity, to feet the sunshine touch a response in the birds. She went gladly to the house, opened her mind to her husband and they prepared to leave the place. The sledge came and they all made their farewell and went away, leaving Gudrun and Gerald standing on the snow waving.

Chapter 30—Snowed Up

When Ursula and Birkin were gone, Gudrun felt herself free in her contest with Gerald. As they grew more used to each other' he seemed to press upon her more and more. At first she could manage him, so that her own will was always left free. But very soon he began to ignore her female tactics, to drop his respect for her whims and her privacies. He began to exert his own will blindly, without submitting to hers. Already a vital conflict had set in which frightened them both. Now in their talks they frankly admitted that they really did not love each other and Gerald silently wished to do away with her. "Sometimes it was he who seemed strongest, whilst she was almost gone, creeping near the earth like a spent wind ; sometimes it was the reverse. But alway it was this eternal

see-saw one destroyed that the other might exist, one ratified because the other was nulled'.

They were still physically interesting to each other, but the union was devoid of all joy and satisfaction : "She tortured the open heart of him even as he turned to her. And she was tortured herself. It may have been her will was stronger. She felt with horror, as if, he tore at the bud of her heart, tore it open, like an irreverent, persistent being".

He let her alone only when he went ski-ing, a sport he loved and she did not. When alone she went to Loerke in whom she found a congenial spirit, who had many things in common with her, apart from the artistic taste and vocation. 'They had a curious game with each other ; of strange suggestivity, strange and leering, as if they had some esoteric understanding of life......Their whole correspondence was in a strange barely comprehensible suggestivity, they kindled themselves at the subtle lusts of the Egyptians or the Mexicans. Gerald, on the contrary, was becoming jealous of him and a conflict of spirit between the two men had already started. Meanwhile Gudrun had informed her fellow-artist that she was not Mrs. Gerald. This was the wound she inflicted on Gerald and was secretly gratified. Loerke was now keenly interested in her, feeling that 'here at last was a woman from whom he could get something. He gravitated cunningly towards her, as if she had some unseen force of attraction'. In his relation with a woman such as Gudrun he had an approach and a power that Gerald never dreamed of. And he had understanding where Gerald was a Calf. He could penetrate into the inner darkness, find the spirit of woman in its inner recess, and wrestle with it there, the central serpent that is coiled at the core of life'. Gudrun was interested neither in the social world and its advantages, not in 'sheer, blind force of passion, but in 'subtle thrills of extreme sensation in reduction. Gerald had penetrated all the outer places of Gudrun's soul. In him she knew the world and, like Alexander, was now in search of new worlds. 'There was only the inner, individual darkness, sensation within the ego, the obsence religious mystery of ultimate reduction, the mystic frictional activities of diabolic reducing down, disintegrating the vital organic body of life'. Gudrun knew all this, though subconsciously—she knew what she should move on to when she left Gerald. She was afraid of Gerald, he might kill her and she did not intend to be killed. 'She had farther to go, a farther, slow, exquisite experience to reap, unthinkable subtleties of sensation to know, before she was finished'. At least, it was time for her now to pass over to the other, the creature, the final craftsman. The artist seemed to hover, like a creature on the wing, waiting to settle. He was neither violent nor ill-timed. But carried on by a sure instinct in the complete darkness of his soul, he corresponded mystically with her, impercepubly, but palpably. They discussed art and life and believed in the isolation of the one from the other. They praised the bygone things and took a sentimental, childish delight in the achieved

perfections of the past. They played with the great figures of the past as if they were puppets moved by them at a show. As for the future they never thought of it in any other term except as a period when the world might be destroyed by one of the several possible intruments of catastrophe. They took delight in re-constructing the picture of Europe in the eighteenth and the ninteenth centuries. They talked in a mixture of languages, full of evasions, double meanings and fantastic vagueness.

Gerald had nothing but contempt and loathing for Loerke and could not find in him any trace of magnetism that was attracting Gudrun. She was fascinated and Gerald cast it into her teeth—'Yes, you are fascinated by that little, dry snake, like a bird gaping ready to fall down its throat'. She was silent, suffused with black rage. They had reached the breaking point, and Loerke was aware of it. But he did not openly invite her to go away with her. He simply suggested that she should move to Paris or better still Dresden where he had a studio and could give her work. He even expressed contempt for love and was ready to sacrifice this to 'a little companionship in intelligence. It would not matter if the woman were a hundred years old or a thousand". He preferred her wit to her beauty, saw Gudrun talking and smiling to the German artist, his heart went on flame.

"A sudden desire leapt in his heart to kill her. His mind was absent all the evening, estranged by the snow and his passion. But he kept the idea constant in him, to strangle every spark of life out of her". Gudrun was unaware of what he was feeling. She went to him and said that she would not be goinng to England, because it was all over between them. She could not love him. As Gerald listened to her 'stark, cold truth' 'A blinding flash went over his brain. His consciousness was gone into his wrists, into his hand. He was one blind, incontinent desire to kill her. His wrists were bursting, there would be no satisfaction till his hands had closed on her'. Gudrun instinctively understood his feeling ; she ran in one flash into her room and locked herself in. But she knew her cunning could outwit him. 'She resolved that he could never cow her or dominate her, nor have any right over her'. She was lost in meditation on the freedom she must enjoy in Dresden, without ties and connections among free souls. She would be free from the boredom of daily routine and the tyranny of time—'the mechanical succession of day following day, *ad infinitum* : the terrible bondage of this tick-tact of time'. Gerald could not save her from it because he himself was a machine, his kisses and embraces were all the motions of a machine. Her heart yearned for the protection of some one 'who would take her in his arms, hold her to his breast and give her rest, pure deep, healing rest'. Gerald himself was a famished child—'an infant crying in the night, this Don Juan'.

Next morning Gerald went to make arrangements for his departure on the morrow. Then taking some food, he set out for

the day on the skis. To Gudrun this day was full of promise. She felt a new lease of life was come upon her and she was happy like a child. Her to-morrow was perfectly vague, and that gave her pleasure. In the afternoon she and Locrke went out in a toboggan. They played till the sun went down, in pure amusement, careless and timeless. Then they stopped to sip tea and talk. All of a sudden they saw the white figure of Gerald near them. Gudrun's heart leapt in sudden terror and she rose to her feet. His presence was unnatural and ghostly to them. Gerald hated the smallish, odd figure of the German artist and wanted to remove it.

A moment later his fist fell on the side of his head and fell him down in the snow. Locrke pulled himself up and rose quivering, looking full at Gerald. But the second blow crashed on the other side of his head and sent him aside as a broken straw. But Gudrun moved forward, raised her clenched hand high and brought it down to the face and on to the breast of Gerald. A great astonishment burst upon him, as if the air had broken. Then he laughed, turning, with strong hands outstretched at last to take the apple of his desire. He took the throat of Gudrun between his hands, that were hard and indomitably powerful. 'The pure zest of satisfaction filled his soul. He was unconscious of her fighting and struggling—the more violent it became the greater the frenzy of delight.' Yet before the zenith was reached a revulsion of contempt and disgust came over him—'Ah, what was he doing, to what depths was he letting himself go ! As if he cared about her enough to kill her......A weakness ran over his body, a terrible relaxing, a decay of strength. Without knowing he had let go his grip and Gudrun had fallen to her knees. He drifted, as on a wind, veered and went drifting away. He was weak, but he did not want to rest, he wanted to go on and on, to the end.

The twilight spread a weird, unearthly light over head; the cold blue night sank on the snow. Gerald stumbled on up the slope of the snow, dazzled by the moonlight. He knew he was following the track towards the summit of the slope. But he was not really conscious. He only wanted to go on, to keep going, until it was finished. He would perhaps climb the ridge. He went along. There was something standing out of the snow. He approached with dimmest curiosity. It was a half-burried crucifix, a little Christ at the top of a pole. He sheered away. Somebody was going to murder him. He had a great dread of being murdered. This was the the moment when death was uplifted, and there was no escape—'Lord Jesus, was it then bound to be ! He could feel the blow descending, he knew he was murdered. Vaguely wandering forward, his hands lifted as if to feel what would heppen, he was waiting for the moment when it would cease. It was not over yet. He had come to the hollow basin of snow, out of which rose a track that brought one to the top of the mountain. But he wandered unconsciously, till he slipped and fell down, and as he fell, something broke in his soul, and immediately he went to sleep.

Chapter 31—Exeunt

The deadbody of Gerald was brought to his residence next morning. Gudrun sat motionless, hiding from the people. She only wrote out a long telegram to Ursula and Birkin. In the afternoon she went to Loerke and found him as emotionless and barren as herself. Birkin and Ursula came : the sisters were together in a moment and Birkin went to Gerald. He had loved him. Yet he felt chiefly disgust at the inert body lying there. Birkin's bowels seemed to turn to ice to see the frozen deadbody that was Gerald. He reached and touched the dead face and felt a freezing sensation within his own self. He went to see the place where Gerald had fallen into the lap of the icy death. He turned away. Either the heart would break or cease to care. Best cease to care. "Whatever the mystery that had brought forth the man and the Universe, it is non-human and has its own ends ; man is not the criterion. God can do without man. The external creative mystery could dispose of man, and replace him with a finer created being. The game was never up. The mystery of creation was fathomless, infallible, inexhaustible, for ever. Races came and went, species passed away but the fountainhead remained incorruptible and unsearchable. To be man was nothing compared to the possibilities of the creative mystery. To have one's pulse beating from the mystery, this was perfection, unutterable satisfaction. Human or inhuman mattered nothing'. Terribly weary, Birkin went away about the day's business. He did it all quietly, without bother. But when in the evening he went in again to look at Gerald between the candles, because of his heart's hunger he was overcome with grief, and sitting down in his chair, he broke into a violent fit of weeping. Ursula, who had followed him, recoiled aghast from him as he sat with sunken head and body convulsively shaken'. Birkin remembered the pact of friendship which he had offered and Gerald did not accept, and this denial would make his departure final, leaving no trace of survival on earth.

They parted. The deadbody of Gerald was taken to England ; Gudrun went to Dresden and gave no clue about her movements ; and Birkin and Ursula stayed at the Mill for a week or two. One evening they were sitting together quietly when Ursula asked Birkin if he needed Gerald, if she was not enough for him. Birkin replied that she was enough for him as a woman, but he wanted a man friend 'as eternal as you and I are eternal'. To make their union complete, he wanted eternal union with a man too.

'I don't believe it', : Said Ursula, "It's an obstinacy, a theory, a perversity. You can't have two kinds of lover, because it's false, impossible'.

'I don't believe that', he said.

5

Questions with Model Answers

Q. 1. Bring out the main traits of D.H. Lawrence, the novelist.

Ans. D.H. Lawrence was temperamentally and artistically a romantic writer, sharing many characteristics with the poets of the early nineteenth century, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley and Keats. Like them he was a subjective writer whose writings are generally based upon his own experiences, problems, complexes, ideals and notions. Moreover, he prized, above every thing else, the sanctity of self, the dignity and inviolability of every individual, which must not be suffered to undergo any compromise and diminution even in such vital relationships as love and friendship. He was naturally critical of all institutions and organizations, social, religious, political and economic, which reduced the individual to a mere unit, without personal dignity or freedom. In Apocalypse he says, "the mass of men have only the tiniest touch of individuality, if any. The mass of men live and move, think and feel collectively, and have practically no individual emotions, feelings or thoughts at all. They are fragments of the collective or social consciousness".

Like the romantics again he looked upon civilization as a fall because it dries up the springs of the emotional and instinctive life and leaves human beings as mere cogs of machine or as bloated heads and blown up stomachs, filled with dust and ashes like the apples of Sodom or dead-sea fruits. Moreover, it has separated man from nature, from the contact of the soil, from the rhythm of the season, which constitute a living fountain of man's health and the primal innocence of the soul. His heart went out in love and admiration to the simple, unsophisticated people, living in close communion with nature. Take, for examples, the following description of a rural community :

"They felt the rush of the sap in spring, they knew the wave which cannot halt, but every year throws forward the seed to begetting......They knew the intercourse between heaven and earth, sunshine drawn into the breast and bowels, the rain sucked up in day time, nakedness that comes with the wind in autumn......Their life

and inter-relations were such ; feeling the pulse and body of the soil, that opened to their furrow for the grain, and became smooth and supple after their ploughing."

An important count in his criticism of the modern industrialism lies in the fact that it has blotted out the rural England, the beauty, freshness and vitality that went with it. In *Women in Love* he observes, through Birkin, that the modern industrial humanity was an ugly blot on the otherwise fair universe. No romantic poet has given natural descriptions so various, so vivid, so glowing and so deeply pulsating with emotion as Lawrence, who travelled widely and carried his sleepless curiosity and sensitiveness to the multitudinous variety of natural loveliness, where ever he went. At the same time like, Wordsworth, he had an instinctive perception of the Life and spirit of nature of which the life of man was a component part. Huxley, one of Lawrence's most intimate friends in the latter part of his life, has referred to his 'extraordinary sensitiveness to what Wordsworth called 'unknown modes of being'. He was always intensely aware of the mystery of the world, and the mystery was always for him a *numen*, divine. Lawrence could never forget...... the darkpresence of the otherness that lies beyond the boundaries of man's conscious mind. This special sensibility was accompanied by a prodigious power of rendering the immediately experienced otherness in terms of literary art.

(b) *The prophet of a new religion* : Like the romantic poet Shelley, Lawrence was a revolutionary, a destroyer and creator, prophet of a new religion which was calculated to redress the wrong done to the human race by our scientific, industrial civilization which has subordinated the heart to the head. The essence of this religion can be put in his own words :

"My great religion is a belief in the blood, the flesh, as being wiser than the intellect. We can go wrong in our minds. But what our blood feels and believes and says, is always true. The intellect is only a bit and bridle. What do I care for knowledge. I conceive a man's body as a kind of flame......and the intellect is just the light that is shed on the things around......It's a flame because it is itself. And we have forgotton ourselves."

"The body's life is the life of sensations and emotions, All the emotions belong to the body, and are only recognized by the mind, where the active emotional self has no real existence, but is all reflected downwards from the mind, the higher emotions, are strictly dead. And by higher emotions we mean love in all its manifestations, from genuine desire to tender love, love of our fellowmen, and love of God".

Lawrence was in full sympathy with Wordsworth's sentiment—'Thanks to the human heart by which we live', because the heart teaches us a better way of knowing than the head—as he puts it, 'there are many ways of knowing ; but two ways are essential for

man, knowing in terms of apartness, which is mental, rational scientific—and knowing in togetherness, which is religious and poetic. But relationship is threefold. First there is relationship to the living universe. Then comes the relationship of man and woman. Then comes the relationship of man to man. And each is blood relationship, not mere spiritual mind. We have abstracted the univere into Matter and Force, we have abstracted men and women into separate personalities—personalites being isolated units, incapabe of togetherness—so that all great relationships are bodiless, dead.' This is Lawrence's emphasis throughout : "This which we are must cease to be, that we may come to pass in another being—'just as the recovery of the human spirit from the base forcing of industrial must lie in recovery of 'the creative reality, the actual living quick itself', so does the recovery depend on the ways in which this reality can be most immediately apprehended : 'the source of all life and knowledge is in man and woman, and the source of all living is the interchange and meeting and mingling of these two."

In 'Sex Versus Loveliness' he writes, 'If only our civilization had taught us how to keep the fire of sex clear and alive, flickering or glowing or blazing in all its varying degrees of strength and communication, we might, all of us, have lived all our lives in love, which means we should be kindled and full of zest in all kinds of ways and for all kinds of things. *Our civilization has almost destroyed the natural flow of common sympathy between men and men, and men and women. And it is this that I want to restore into life.*

Sex mysticism : Lawrence's concept of sex, which is elaborated in *The Rainbow* and in *Women in Love*, as well as his psychological essays, is not psychological, but spiritual. Sex is a means not of mere recreation or natural gratification and generation, but of self-realization self-fulfilment and of the recovery of the wholeness of self-or soul, the perception of 'otherness' in the partner and in the universe outside. It reminds us of W.B. Yeat's Crazy Jane who, in sexual union saw that the 'Zodiac has become the Sphere' or of Joyce's epiphany or of Eliot's moment of mystic experience of the 'still point' above the flux of the world. So he describes this union as a ritual or the communion in the mystic terminology—paroxysm, ecstasy, darkness, flame, fainting, swooning, purging and resurrection which we associate with religious practices. Its basic tenets are known to the students of his *Women in Love*, and can only be briefly summarized here :

The unique individual self, which is the dark divinity in each of us, is incomplete and will find its completion in the union with its opposite—'the unknown of womanhood'. The sexual union of man and woman, is a reconciliation of the opposites, a momentary equilibrium, 'the poised unflamed stillness', the moment of ecstasy which is the true realization of one's being :

"When I understand fully, flesh and bone, and mind and soul and spirit as one rose of union, then *I am*". This moment is des-

cribed in *Sons and Lovers* in the union of Clara and Morel :

"It was as if he and the stars, and the dark herbage and Clara were licked up in an immense tongue of flame, which tore onwards and upwards. Everything rushed along in living beside him ; everything was still, perfect in itself along with him." Lawrence was opposed to sexual immersion encouraged by Freud, and pleaded for the union of the physical and spiritual sides of love. Another point constantly harped upon by Birkin, one of the apostles of Laurentian cult of love and marriage, is the idea of 'polarity', the separateness of man and woman in union : "There must be two in one, always two in one, an equilibrium, a pure balance of two single beams, as the stars balance each other'.

Rossetti celebrated the sweetness of love as an intensity of physical union, leading to the exaltation of the two souls soaring, like a pair of birds in the cloud-girt heavens, and he was greeted with the charge of 'The Fleshly School of Poetry'. Lawrence described the mystical ecstasy of sexual union, and was charged with obscenity and pornography. But he put up a spirited fight and made a gap in the citadel of opposition, but he could make no convert to his religion of sex, which was, however, hewn out of his personal experiences.

(*c*) *A prolific writer* : Lawrence had a literary career of about 20 years, but, during this brief period, he produced ten full-length novels ; seven short novels and some fifty short stories. 'His poems fill three volumes of his collected edition, and his literary criticism makes a large volume. He wrote four travel-books, a study of European History, two 'philosophical books, a long essay on education, some plays and many miscellaneous essays, *Phoenix*, which he left unpublished at the time of his death, contains nearly nine hundred very full pages and the new edition of his letters is even longer'. But it is in the novel that his genius found its best and fullest expression and he held this literary form in highest esteem. "They novel is one bright book of life. Books are not life. They are tremulations on the ether. But the novel as a tremulation can make the whole man alive tremble. Which is more than poetry, philosophy, science or any other book—tremulations can do. And being a novelist, I consider myself superior to saint, the scientist, the philosopher and the poet—men who may be great masters of the different bits of man alive', but never the whole man". His reputation as a novelist rests upon his *White Peacock* ; *Sons and Lovers* ; *The Rainbow* ; *Women in Love* ; *Aaron's Rod* ; *Kangaroo* ; *The Plumed Serpent* and *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. All of them illustrate his conviction that the novel can inform and lead into new places the flow of our sympathetic consciousness, and it can lead our sympathy away in recoil from things gone dead' : Virtually all statements he made on all topics, and virtually all stories he told, were elaboration of his idea, his figure in the carpet 'that the blood, the flesh, is wiser than the intellect'. His hatred of middle class standards comes from his hatred of civilization which

tramples on instinctual values. And many of Lawrence's other oppositions – to money-worship, to censorship, to machines, to literature bowdlerized as conception stemmed from this blood-versus-mind doctrine, which determines the outcome of his fictional efforts and the behaviour of his characters. And it was of course this philosophy that motivated Lawrence to write so fully about sexual philosophy, that made the sexual battle-field his principal base of operation".

(*d*) *His fictional technique* : In a letter to Edward Garnett Lawrence wrote, "you must not look in my novel for old stable *ego* of the character. There is another ego according to whose action the individual is unrecognizable, and passes through, as it were, allotropic states which it needs a deeper sense than any other we have been used to exercise, to discover all states of the same single radically unchanged element. (Like as diamond and coal are the same pure single element of carbon. The ordinary novel would trace the history of the diamond......And my diamond may be coal or soot, and my theme is carbon.) Again, I say, do not look for the development of the novels to follow the lines of certain characters : The characters fall into the form of some other rhythmic form". It means that the novels of Lawrence do not describe only the external movements and gestures of his characters. They are more concerned with the revelation of those deep feelings and passions which lie far beneath the external surface. "There is always flux in Lawrence, always transition, always struggle, always renewal ; the life of the people is never undynamic. Moreover, his characters are always alive. and he, indeed, illuminated fiction in a new way, and in dealing with ultrasensitive people on the edges rather than in centres of life, he was giving his readers a new vision of existence".

Critics who judged the novels of Lawrence by orthodox standard found them lacking in form or loosely constructed. One of them, for example, observes, "Form for Lawrence was unimportant-though he was capable of writing aptly finished short tales and novelettes : his longer novels are held together by a succession of moments of crucial experience ; its continuity is fitful – a series of revitalized crises of bodily relationship". This criticism misses the main point. Mark Spilka has perceptively observed that the chief concern of Lawrence was the death and resurrection of the soul within the living body. "And so to accommodate the concept of the soul not as a stable but ever-changing element, a kind of second ego which moves along within the flux of life, waxing and waning in accord with man's emotional experience, he discovered and employed emotional form ; he learnt to deal directly and obliquely with specific states of being : in other words, he learned to chronicle the movements of the soul—and learned it primarily in his novels. Thus, in the better part of his works, long or short, the 'crucial' moments always mount or flow toward definite ends'.

(*e*) *His style* : Regarding the art and style of D. H. Lawrence

Allen has observed : "Lawrence is much close to his characters, and we are brought into immediate, intimate relation with them through the sheer urgency of his writing : the words seem hot and quivering on the page. He captures, it seems, the moment of life itself, both in men and women and in the physical world of nature. There is a delighted, immediate, non-intellectual response to everything alive. It was precisely this quality which distinguished Lawrence's father. Unlike him, Lawrence was never a miner, but he had what one feels is essentially a miner's response to the world of nature ; it is as though he has emerged daily from the darkness of the pit and daily seen the world new-born".

His approach to natural objects, to the animals, and to human beings is primitive, in the sense that it seems to be what Jung calls 'a biological appreciation'. The phrase means that one can best appreciate a thing in physical terms by touching it. In the *Women in Love* there is an interesting remark made by one of the characters : "One would *feel* things instead of merely looking at them. I should feel the air move against me, and feel the things I touched......I am sure life is all wrong because it has become much too visual".

As he explored the dark depths of his characters he naturally made use of a suggestive symbolic language, more in the manner of the romantic poets, than in that of the French symbolist poets of his age. It means that his symbols are drawn from the familiar objects of nature and the common everyday experiences. Darkness and light, colour and flame, the rainbow and the rose are the favourite symbols in his prose and his poetry alike. And so are such symbols as water, mud, snow, river and fountain, birds soaring in the air, and the dark flame going out of one human body to or into another. The favourite romantic symbol, tree, appears again and again, with all the implications of birth and germination, budding, growing, striking roots, as he says : "You are your own tree of life, roots and limbs and trunk. Somewhere within the wholeness of the tree lies the very self, the quick ; its own innate Holy Ghost And this holy ghost puts forth new buds, and pushes past all limits, and shakes off a whole body of dying leaves". This passage reminds us of an interesting aspect of his style—frequent use of the terms, phrases and rhythms of the Bible, which was the compulsory reading of his youth and remained a part of his artistic armoury even after he had discarded the orthodox Christianity. Students of *Women in Love* need no reminder of the fact that many of the incidents and activities in the novel are symbolic, be it the picture of Gerald controlling the mare with his ruthless force or Birkin throwing pebbles into the lake to smash the image of the moon reflected there.

The prose of Lawrence is poetic, vivid and animated with passion. He is the master of language, of the inevitable phrase and of spontaneous music and rhythm. But he is not free from mannerism, one aspect of which was noted very early by the critics —his habit of repeating certain phrases and epithets. In reply to

this charge Lawrence wrote : "In point of style, fault is often found with the continual, slightly modified repetition ; the only answer is that it is natural to the author ; and that every natural crisis in emotion or passion or understanding comes from this pulsing, frictional to-and-fro which works upto culmination" R. B. Heilman has listed the words and epithets which have been frequently repeated by Lawrence in novel after novel — *nouns* = blood, will, power, violence, malevolence, contact, potency, maleness, trance-nullity ; *adjectives* : pure, naked, essential, electric, black, sensual, proud, insolent, erect, prone, convulsive, corrupt, insidious and sinister etc ; *Past participles* : fulfilled, completed, perfected, created, translated, transfigured, convulsed, dazed, stunned, stupified nullified, obliterated, disintegrated etc.

But with all its limitations it is a warm, bracing and living style and places Lawrence among those masters of present century fiction, Conrad, Joyce and Virginia Woolf, who removed the barrier between fiction and poetry by applying the style and technique of poetry to prose fiction. Secondly, he delved into the depth of human consciousness and made his readers aware of many experiences, impulses and modes of being hitherto unknown. Lastly, he made the civilized man more aware of the modes of life he had forgotten, deeper psychic modes, more primitive, and even more elemental modes of animals, birds and plants. In his 'Apocalypse', which may be regarded as his last will and testament, Lawrence wrote :

"For man, the vast marvel is to be alive .....Whatever the unborn and the dead may know, they cannot know the beauty, the marvel of being alive in the flesh......We ought to dance with rapture that we should be alive and in flesh, and part of the living, incarnate cosmos". Whatever one may say about his philosophy of sex and love there is no denying the anthenticity of his own convictions and the passionate intensity of expression in which those convictions have been presented to the readers. Lawrence rightly believed that one great crime committed by modern civilization was the creation of a system which has made the world ugly and human individuals helpless instruments of the blind, impersonal machine ; and of a soulless organization, which aims at producing and amassing money and material goods, under the weight of which the living man has been smothered.

"To be alive—that was what Lawrence the man was, what his work is, and what he wanted his readers to be. And also to take life seriously......The flippant person, the purely sensual person, or the purely idealistic person—these are not 'man alive'. Man alive is living through all his senses..... living with a vital connexion with his own sex and the opposite sex, with birds, and beasts and flowers and the whole natural world. It is this life that is presented with such bounty from *The White Peacock* to the *Last Poems*, and the lavishness with which it is offered does not involve any lack of discrimination or sureness of touch"

Q. 2. Write a note on Lawrence's art of characterization, with special reference to *Women in Love*.

Ans. Lawrence wrote to Garnett that he was not interested in the fixed and stable ego of his characters, but in something deeper and more instinctive which was below the ego. It means that he accepted the psychological distinction between 'character' and 'personality'. 'Character' is the sum-total of the external actions and behaviours of men or women, the visible aspect which they present to the world, which is definite, logical, rational, and, as for as possible, consistent. 'Personality on the other hand, is something inner, more fluid, even inconsistent, waxing and waning—in the words of a critic, "Lawrence wishes to explore a deeper life, a life that seethes and boils beneath institutions as it seeths and boils beneath 'personalities'.

Commenting on Lawrence's art of characterization in this novel Mark Shorer has rightly observed : "What we have in fact, are several orders of characterization. We have a group of 'free characters, and a group of bound characters. The 'free' characters are limited to four (Birkin, Ursula, Gudrun and Gerald), the four who seek out their fate through the plot movement ; the rest are all fixed in their social roles, and rigid, social scenes, and, except perhaps for Hermione and the elder Criches, are caricatures whose fate is sealed before the outset". The remarkable thing about the art of Lawrence is its capacity to make the characters vivid and alive, whether they are sketched briefly, as Hermione or Loerke, or with great elaboration, as Gerald and Gudrun. Here the devices used for character-portraiture are more or less orthodox—direct description, dialogue and action, psychological analysis, the remarks of other characters etc. We may take the case of Hermione : she is introduced to us in a direct description of her person, dress and airs, her nature, her knowledge which is a dead-weight on her soul, and the gaps in her mental armour which she wants to fill by means of sexual relationship with Birkin. The traits are further defined by her opinions expressed in conversation with others in which she stresses the value of knowledge and the supreme importance of the will power.. But it is Birkin who tears off the veil and exposes the essence of her nature in all its nakedness by his frank, caustic and merciless remarks. He sees through her behaviour of love, tenderness and suavity as so many disguises of that possessiveness which is natural to the woman, who is the mother of man and tries desperately to keep him tied to her apron strings. He tells her with brutal frankness that she is the moon with one half only in her possession, the other half being dead and gone ; that knowledge is everything to her and she has no spontaneous flow ; that she is a withered leaf on the tree of knowledge and even her animalism is in her head ; that she has will and intellect, but lacks the dark sensual body, where love generally germinates.

The psychological analysis is employed in the climactic scene

which ends in her murderous attack on Birkin ; but all the inner states leading to her maddening hatred have been carefully and vividly presented by the author and lead to the glowing description of her hate-convulsed mind.

Practically, identical method is employed in the depiction of Loerke, whose very name signifies that he is a negation of life and the embodiment of the principle of decadence and death. The essence of his nature is brought out in his conversation with Ursula and Gudrun about his theory of art, and later the confidences he shares with Gudrun about his private life and his behaviour towards his models. But it is Birkin, again, who etches the essence of his character with the acidity of his tongue : 'He lives like a rat, in the river of corruption just where it falls into the bottomless pit', he says, and adds that mankind wants to explore the sewers and Loerke is the wizard rat that swims ahead'. And this is confirmed by the remark of the author how, insect—like, he works his way insidiously till he reaches the core of Gudrun's heart. Further light on the character of Loerke, as well as of Gudrun is thrown by the author's own description of their relationship, which points to something abnormal, sinister and destructive, as is clear from the following quotations :

> "Their whole corres pondence was in a strange, barely comprehensible suggestivity, they kindled themselves at the subtle lust of the Egyptians or the Mexicans. The whole game was one of subtle inter-suggestivity, and they wanted to keep it on the plane of suggestion. From their verbal and physical nuances they got the highet satisfaction in the nerves, from a queer interchange of half-suggested ideas, looks, expressions, gestures."

> Again :" The world was finished, now, for her. There was only the inner, individual darkness......*the obscene religious mystery* of ultimate reduction, the mystic, frictional activities of diabolic reducing down, disintegrating the vital organic body of life" etc.

GERALD

Gerald is the most vividly realized and elaborately depicted character in the novel, and in the building of his personality the novelist has used all known devices at his disposal--direct, dramatic, psychological and symbolic. He is a tragic figure and though he is shadowed by death from the very beginning, yet he has an air of dignity about him and his final destruction is quite capable of arousing fear and pity which Aristotle, the father of criticism in the West, regarded as the sentiments peculiar to tragedy. He "stands under a kind of triple fatality from the beginning. He is the scion of a family whose vitality is mysteriously defective, who are 'curiously bad at living', who 'can do things but cannot get on with life at all". Furthermore his nature has been adversely conditioned by the remarkable relation of 'mutual interdestructivity' his parents

have lived through, which has driven the mother into mental alienation and the father into cancer. Finally, he has his own particular defect, the instinctual flow that enabled him to play Cain to his brother's Abel'. Gerald may also be reviewed as a kind of monstrous exaggeration of a characteristic of late nineteenth century English upper class type, of the man who makes a brilliant administrative career by keeping his feelings under a control so severe that the feelings either turn nasty or die altogether". He is a divided man, split between mind and will on the one hand and the instinctive passion on the other : he has beauty of person, but his emotions run in the narrow primitive grooves and the novel shows him to be unfit for both friendship and true union with a woman in love and marriage.

"He moves in an atmosphere of 'essential' death and decay. His early love affair is with the London Courtesan Minette, to whom he is attracted by the film of disintegration in her eyes. Water is one of the principal symbols of dissolution in *Women in Love*, and Gerald is intimately associated with that symbol, first as a swimmer: then in the scene where Gudrun is sketching water plants and he starts up before her 'out of the mud' his hand like the stem of one of those plants growing in decay. Birkin regards him as a type of the North Arctic white race doomed to meet with destruction in the snow abstracted.

Gerald's nature is first presented symbolically as a rider on the Arab mare piercing her soft flanks with his cruel spurs or nail in order to subdue her to his will, to discipline, thereby turning a living, energetic creature into a mere instrument. This is followed by the elaborate direct description, in the chapter, 'the Industrial Magnate', of the resolute, ruthless way in which he builds order and organization out of chaos, reducing human workers into machine tools or instruments of production, destroying their life, joy and hope, but with deep injury to his own inner life. This is described by the author himself :

"But now he had succeeded—he had finally succeeded. And once or twice lately, when he was alone in the evening and had nothing to do, he had suddenly stood up in terror, not knowing what he was. And he went to the mirror and looked long and closely at his own face, at his own eyes seeking for something. He was afraid, in mortal, dry fear, but he knew not what cf......He was afraid that one day he would break down and be purely meaningless bubble lapping round a darkness".

But he has strength and manliness and turns to Gudrun for a healing balm through sexual union, which may or may not lead to marriage. But here also there is a shadow of fatality. The whole thing has been described through the reaction of Gudrun to the impact of his personality on her heart. The very first impression is strangely compelling but irritating and mysterious.

"And then she experienced a keen paroxysm, a transport, as if she had made some incredible discovery ...A strange transport took possession of her, all her veins were in a paroxysm of violent sensation......She was tortured with desire to see him again, a nostalgia, a necessity to see him again, to make sure that she was not deluding herself, that she really felt this strange and overwhelming sensation on his account, this knowledge of him in her essence, this powerful apprehension'.

Then comes the picture of Gerald controlling the mare with the weight of his body and his sharp spurs ; she is overwhelmed with the strange masochistic feeling of attraction and repulsion. This is followed by the Rabbit episode, with her wounded and bleeding hand, the significance of which is thus described :

"Gerald tossed the rabbit down......Gudrun watched it with faint horror. She looked up at him, and a slight sinister smile contracted her white face. The vindictive mockery in her voice made his brain quiver......There was a league between them......they were implicated with each other in abhorrent mysteries".

This is the obscene marriage ritual, which is based on a sensuality violent and extreme as death. They had no conscious intimacy, no tenderness of love. It was all the lust, and the infinite, maddening intoxication of the senses, a passion of death. In Chapter 21—'Threshold', Gerald and Gudrun are shown in the midst of a conversation on Birkin's ideal of marriage, when a strange sensation overwhelms them both : "And they both felt the subterranean desire to let go, to fling away everything, and lapse into a sheer unrestraint, ***brutal and licentious***. A strange black passion surged up pure in Gudrun. She felt strong. *She felt her hand strong, as if she could tear the world asunder with them*. Ah, if that which was unknown and suppressed in her were once let loose, what an orgiastic and satisfying event it would be. And she wanted it, she trembled slightly from the proximity of the man, who stood just behind her, suggestive of the same black licentiousness that rose in herself, this unacknowledged frenzy".

Their first sexual union has the stigma of death on it as Gerald enters her room with the mind of his father's grave sticking to his boots. The union is one-sided : 'He had come for vindication. She let him hold her in his arms, clasp her close against him. *He found in her infinite relief. Into her he poured all his pent-up darkness and corrosive death, and he was whole again......And she, subject, received him as a vessel filled with his bitter portion of death.* She had no power at this crisis to resist. *The terrible frictional violence of death filled her, and she received it in an ecstasy of subjection, in throes of acute, violent sensation.*

As this exaltation subsides, they recognize the naked nature of each other : Gadrun perceives that Gerald is 'a handsome smiling wolf, of imperious will-power which must be opposed and subdued,

and she exults to think how dependent he is on her for sexual gratification. Gerald, on his part, discovers the same tough will-power in her and secretly resolves to tame her for his purpose. So the tussle begins and reaches its climax in the snow valley of Tyrol, where Gerald in a mad frenzy tries to choke Gudrun, but ultimately meets with his own death, and his whiteness merges with the infinite chaos of snow flakes. Lawrence has shed dignity on the dead Gerald, and the poignancy of its pathos is emphasized in the description of Birkin's reaction to the tragic event :

"Suddenly his heart contracted... ..as, with a strange whimpering cry, the tears broke out. He sat down on a chair, shaken by sudden access. Ursula who had followed him, recoiled aghast from him, as he sat with sunken head and body convulsively shaken, mak'ng a strange horrible sound of tears".

BIRKIN

Birkin offers a sharp contrast to Gerald and this contrast can be put in the words of a critic : "The wavering indistinct lambent' Birkin is alive by virtue of his odd mobility and changeableness". His sudden shifts of attitudes and feeling, his lapses of taste and logic, protect the life within him. Gerald, who is the soul of good social form, whose ideas are built up logically into lucid formulations, is wholly consistent on his white, gleaming surface but a chaos inside where his feelings are".

The novelist has introduced him as follows :

'There was his wonderful, desirable life-rapidity, the rare quality of an utterly desirable man : and there was at the same time this ridiculous, mean effacement into a Salvator Mundi and a Sun-day-school teacher, a prig of the stiffest type". In the novel, unfortunately it is the latter aspect of his character, 'the Sunday-school teacher' aspect which is most apparent and persistent : the result is he is as boring to the readers as he tends to be to poor Ursula, who is at once allured by his love, and teased by his philosophy of love and relationship between man and woman and man and man. By making him mouthpiece of his own philosophy and attitude to life and society Lawrence has placed a serious hurdle in the way of his natural growth and concrete manifestation. He seldom forgets his burden and seems, in consequence, to be more of an intellectual maniac or the embodiment of a philosophy than a human being. Even when he appears before us in action other than his propaganda work he remains an eccentric, difficult to grasp or define clearly. Take, for example, his action after his recovery from his illness, as he sits beside the lake and goes on pelting at the image of the moon reflected in water. This action is apparently as irrational as Gudrun's frenzied dance before the high land cattle. Such characters and actions lend support to Auden's observation that 'Like Blake, Lawrence was interested not in 'indi-

viduals' but in states. In writing about nature or about strangers this does not matter, as these are only states of being, but it is a serious drawback in writing fiction which cannot avoid the individual and his relations to other individuals over a stretch of time...... his long novels do not quite succeed because we get bored with the lack of a character to bind the states together and give them uniqueness".

This is, at least, true of Birkin in this novel. He is, of course, the symbol of love, harmony and the spontaneous free life and is eager to connect himself with other individuals, but always on his own terms. He seldom agrees with others and never modifies his views out of respect for different view points. Even his feelings obey the dictates of his philosophy and it is only when Ursula is ready to submit to his idea of love that he manifests his human side—his tenderness and grateful admiration for lovelines and refreshing love. Consider the following description of their romantic situation :

"I love you', he whispered as he kissed her, and trembled with pure hope, like a man who is born again to a wonderful, lively hope far exceeding the bounds of death......the passion of gratitude with which he received her into his soul, the extreme, unthinkable gladness of knowing himself living and fit to unite with her, he who was so nearly dead......so near to being gone with the rest of his race down the slope of mechanical death. He worshipped her as age worships youth, he gloried in her because, in his own grain of faith, he was young as she, he was her proper mate. This marriage with her was his resurrection and his life".

But in the scene at the close of the novel he tells irritated Ursula that their union is not complete in itself and he wished to complete it by contracting frienship with Gerald. So, the new-born Birkin is as changeable and protean as the old one.

THE TWO SISTERS

In his famous letter to Garnett where Lawrence explains his new conception of character in the fiction that he was going to produce, he observes, "I don't so much care about what the woman *feels*—in the ordinary usage of the word, that presumes an ego to feel with. I only care about what the woman is, as a phenomenon (or as representing some greater inhuman will) instead what she feels according to human conception." This idea is fully illustrated in the characterisation of Ursula and Gudrun. They are alike as women, but they are fundamentally unlike each other as the representatives of the inhuman will, that is the forces of life and death, Ursula being the symbol of life and Gudrun that of death and destruction. They have been built on this general principle, which governs their ideas, opinions, likes and dislikes.

Ursula is marked by sensitive expectancy, having always that strange brightness of an essential flame that is caught and enmeshed in the eyes, as if she were always trying to lay hold of life. Gudrun on the other hand, is said to have a look of confidence and diffidence mixed in one, and a palpable contempt for the life around her. This contrast is brought out in their different attitudes to art. Gudrun and Loerke, the artist, discuss a piece of statue, a naked girl on a horse, when Ursula comments that the horse in the statue is quite unlike the living animal in real life. To this the artist replies that it is a part of a work of art, and has no relation to anything outside that work of art. Gudrun is in tacit agreement with it, but Ursula retorts passionately. "As far your world of art and world of reality, you have to separate the two because you cannot bear to know what you are. The world of art is only the truth about the real world, that's all—but you are too far gone to see it".

Then, their contrast is further clarified by their different attitudes to the cold snowy landscape, which is the symbol of death. Gudrun, like Gerald, is a 'White Demon' and the Arctic region is her natural element. She seemed to pass altogether into the whiteness of the snow—'became a pure, thoughtless crystal. She looked round and saw peak beyond peak of rock and snow. And it seemed to her like a garden, with the peaks for pure flowers, and her heart gathering them !' Ursula, on the other hand, went alone into the world of pure, new snow. But the dazzling whiteness seemed to beat upon her till it hurt her ; she felt the cold was slowly strangling her soul Her head felt dazed and numb. Now suddenly, as by miracle, she remembered that away beyond, below her, lay the dark, fruitful earth She wanted to realize the miracle at once. She wanted at this instant to have done with the snow world, the terrible static ice-built mountain-tops'.

In means that their contrast is deliberate and schematic and the nature of the scheme is hinted at in their conversation on marriage, with which the novel opens. Gudrun says bitterly, 'Nothing materializes ! *Everything withers in the bud* I get no feeling whatever from the thought of bearing children". Ursula, however, is said to feel a force within herself, striving to grasp life : "She seemed to try and *put her hands out, like an infant in the womb.* These two images, the withered bud, and the child in the womb, represent the forces of death and life, of destruction and creation which Gudrun and Ursula respectively typify and which determine the different directions towards which they move in the novel, and different fortunes they meet with at the close of it.

But they are essentially women, hypersensitive to the attraction of the male body and given to sudden elation and depression, to ecstasy and despondency, to the fascination of life alternating with the lure of death. Critics have pointed out that in Lawrence the feminine point of view predominates, and there are repeated references to a woman 'gazing erotically at a man and tingling to his novel-to-knees equipment—'men's life-giving loins, powerful buttocks, thrilling thighs', while men seldom contemplate the limbs

of women erotically. We give below two quotations to illustrate the similarity of the two sisters in this respect :

In the hotel at Southwell, Ursula kneels before Birkin :

"She closed her hands over the full rounded body of his loins, as he stooped over her, she seemed to touch the quick of the mystery of darkness, that was bodily him. It was a perfect passing away for both of them, and at the same time the most intolerable accession into being'. Compare this picture to that of Gudrun reacting to the nearness of Gerald in the boat :

'Oh, and the beauty of the subjection of his loins, white and dimly luminous as he climbed into the boat, his back rounded and soft—ah, this was too much for her, too final a vision. She knew it, and it was fatal. The terrible hopelessness of fate, and of beauty, such beauty !"

We know, however, that Gudrun is soon disillusioned and discovers the 'luminous' Gerald to be a white, smiling wolf of ferocious nature, which must be combated and subdued. And Ursula also alternates between love and hate, and the latter is though momentary, terribly violent and consuming :

'Her whole nature seemed sharpened and intensified into a pure dart of hate. She was translated beyond herself. It was like a possession. It was as if he were a beam of essential enmity, a beam of light that did not only destroy her, but denied her altogether, revoke her world. She saw him as a clear stroke of uttermost contradiction".

Again the relationship between Gudrun and Loerke is suggestively described as something obscene and beastly, one beast mounted on the back of the other, which is a symptom of decadence. But the stages in the union of Ursula and Birkin are clearly not free from this obscenity, as is illustrated by the following quotations :

1. 'He had taken her at the roots of the darkness and shame—like a demon, laughing......shrugging......accepting finally".
2. 'So bestial, they two !—so degraded ! She winced. But after all, why not ? She exulted as well..... She was free, when she knew everything, and no dark shameful things were denied her.

As Gudrun contemplates her life with Gerald : "Her heart beat fast, she flew away on wings of elation, imagining a future. He would be a Napoleon of peace or a Bismarck—and she the woman behind him. And even as she lay in fictitious transport, bathed in the strange false sun-shine of hope in life, something seemed to snap within her, and a terrible cynicism began to gain upon her, blowing like a wind'.

Ursula also passes through similar alternations of extremes of

hope and despondency, only the process is reversed in her case. She passes through hatred and even disgust of life itself to fulfilment in love, which comes as a new birth to her, blotting out all memories of her past and all the ties with family and society.

From this detailed discussion it is clear that Lawrence, in the portrayal of character, 'compromises with realistic conventions and, despite an aesthetic theory that scorns social identity and predetermined endings, to interest us in his people and their destinies by various traditional means',—Anthony Beal has referred to Lawrence's method of procedure illustrated by 'the alternation of passages of 'thought', of intellectual discussion and psychic feeling with minute description of everyday things—above all, dress. Every reader o the book remembers the descriptive details lavished on various outfits worn by Ursula, Gudrun and Hermione. It is as if Lawrence is anxious to anchor down his more high-flown balloons with solid detail of normal everyday objects. In fact these descriptions serve also as a criticism of the higher flights, just as Ursula's mockery puts Birkin's rodomontades in their place. The method is very successful ; we remember the details of lovers having tea at Southwell, when we have forgotton whose loins it was that were being caressed, and what 'electric passion the caresser felt".

Before concluding this discussion of Lawrence's art of characterization reference must be made to the crucial fact that in the critical situations the characters of Lawrence are guided by subconscious impulses which they are not aware of and which do not admit of logical and rational explanation. In the grip of towering passion of love and hate they lose there consciousness and submit to the unconscious. The hot hate under which Hermione makes a murderous assault on Birkin and the entire destructive and self-destructive behaviour of Gerald towards the end of the novel are glaring examples of this fact. The result is that there arises a curious sense of fatality, the sense of a power, beyond the control of human beings, which moves the helpless characters irresistibly. There are repeated references to this fact, and Birkin, Ursula, Gerald and Gudrun all aknowledge, in so many words, that it is fate which is determining their future and their decisions have little weight. This is why they pass through the curious ebbs and flows of passions—love followed by hate, loyalty by mockery, repulsion by attraction—in a way which upsets all calculation. Under such circumstances consistency in character which Aristotle insists upon in his *Poetics* and which the orthodox novelists and dramists cherish even to-day, cannot be found in the great novels of Lawrence.

Q. 3. Write a note on the structure of ***Women in Love*****.**

Ans. It will be convenient to begin the examination of the structure of *Women in Love* with a remark of F.R. Leavis that occurs

in his book on D.H. Lawrence, the novelist. He observes there' "*Women in Love* is the work of a novelist who, in undertaking *The Rainbow*, had explained that another *Sons and Lovers* must not be looked for from him, but that the original treatment of life he was now proposing required a formidable originality of method and style". It means that in his two crucial novels, *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love* Lawrence abandoned the orthodox narrative technique that he had employed in his first characteristic novel, *Sons and Lovers*. Narrative technique implies that the novel tells a story; that it has a definite plot, made up of a chain of events linked together by what Aristotle has called 'the law of probability and of necessity', which means that one incident must lead to another and the story must move towards a definite end and the scenes and events forming part of the plot must be subordinated to this final end and each should have significance only in proportion to its importance in the scheme of the story.

If we examine the structure of *Women in Love* in the light of this explanation we shall be at a loss to account for many scenes and situations which occupy so much space in the novel and have been presented in the eloquent, colourful style of the novelist. We may refer to the scene where Gerald is controlling the Arab mare, or where he and Gudrun are striving to catch and subdue the Rabbit, Bismark, or the long descriptive scene which shows Birkin throwing stones into the pond to break and obliterate the image of the moon reflected there. Then the best written passages describing the moods and emotions of characters, hate, love, ecstasy, depression, or those which dilate upon thrills of. the union of man and woman, or the flutters which the nearness of the lover's body causes in the heart of the woman fascinated by his loins and his thighs—all these are not calculated to facilitate the course of a story, moving towards its final goal.

If we consider the end of the novel, we find that the structure is open; that the novel does not end on a note of finality and it only opens the path to a further movement of a process—as David Daiches observed, "... ..with Gerald dead, Gudrun fascinated by an attractive, corrupt German sculptor, and Ursula and Rupert facing each other, is far from embodying a final solution. Rupert demands more than a satisfactory relationship between man and wife, and the novel ends on a question." F.R. Leavis, the great advocate of Lawrence's genius and art, has observed apropos of *The Rainbow*, what is equally applicable to *Women in Love*, "A more serious criticism, perhaps, bears on the signs of too great a tentativeness in the development and organization of the later part; signs of a growing sense in the writer of an absence of any conclusion in view."

All this criticism is irrelevant because Lawrence was writing a novel with a purpose quite different from what governs the method of an orthodox novelist. Lawrence had all this in his mind when

he wrote caustically, "Tell Arnold Bennett that all rules of construction hold good only for novels that are copies of other novels. A book which is not a copy of other books has its own construction, and what he calls faults, he being an old imitator, I call characteristies". Lawrence has explained his aim in clear and explicit terms in his letter to Edward Garnett where he says that he is not interested in a stable ego which shows a character to be logical and definite, reacting to external circumstances in an expected way. His interest, on the other hand, lies in another ego, deeper, darker, more instinctive, perhaps irrational by which a character is not easily definable. The meaning is that Lawrence was interested in the psychic states of his characters and his novels are psychic dramas, where incidents and situations are so many scenes best calculated to explain or manifest these states. The point will be clear from the following quotation taken from the comments made by Miss Elizabeth Drew on the technique of Henry James in *The Portrait of a Lady* :

'James creates many highly charged scenes of direct confrontation between his chief actors, but the scenes of inner drama have as much or more importance than the outer. What goes on within the consciousness before acting or speaking, and after it ; "the very note and trick, the strange irregular rhythm of life" ; the hidden vibrations between minds—those are his special field". Lawrence, however, is not interested in mental consciousness, but in 'blood consciousness', in emotions and impulses which have to be recaptured or reproduced in words, or suggested by means of symbols and images or symbolic scences and actions. Dorothy Van Ghent has aptly observed, "Perhaps in no other novelist do we find the image so largy replacing episode and discursive analysis, and taking over the expressive function of these, as it does in Lawrence .....He must make us aware, sensitively aware, not merely conceptually aware—of the profound life force whose rhythm the natural creatures obey...... He seeks the objective equivalent of feeling in the image. We must be made aware of characters through their feelings, for only in feeling have the biological life-force and the sense of identity......any immediacy of reality".

Critics have referred to 'the fluid dance-like movement of characters and their shifting relationships in the novel, but that does not explain much. The better description of the structure can be given by using Eliot's phrase—'musical organization'. It means that the novel has a double structure—external and internal ; the external structure is loose and incoherent, but the internal structure is coherent and close-knit. The internal structure is based on the fundamental idea—the idea of life and death : the relationship which leads to freedom, harmony and life, and that which drifts towards death, the death of body or of heart and soul. We have two pairs of contrasted lovers set going along the road towards life or death, and the various situations in the novel are only so many stages in

the journey. There is hardly any thing in the novel which has no connection with this inner rhythm of the novel.

Then, a word about the ending of the novel.

Alan Friedman has observed that the open structure of the novel is quite consistent with the modern conception that life is a process and human experience is really inconclusive. This was the practice of many a continental novelist. Andre Gide, for example, writes : "This novel will end sharply, not through exhaustion of the subject, but on the contrary through its expansion and by a sort of blurring of its outline. It must not be neatly rounded off, but rather disperse, disintegrate".

A more illuminating comment, however, comes from Mark Spilka : "To accommodate his concept of soul as a stable but ever-changing element, a kind of second ego which moves along within the flux of life, waxing and waning in accord with man's emotional experience, he discovered and employed emotional form : to chronicle the movement of the soul through a succession of moments of crucial experience. But in the better part of his works these crucial moments always mount or flow toward definite ends. The four greatest novels,—those which express his finest psychological and moral insights,—are all well organized on ritualistic lines. It seems scarcely accidental, that a man is born at the end of *Sons and Lovers* ; a woman is born as *The Rainbow* ends ; while in *Women in Love* a man and a woman meet and marry and conceive a child, eight years later, in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. These novels coincide, that is, with his own rites of passage"—with his early years of elopement and selfdiscovery, and with the later years of maturity and selfadjustment, when he was able to synthesize his material and to give new order to the experience of love".

Q. 4. Critically examine the salient features of Lawrence's prose style, in *Women in Love*.

Ans. Lawrence is generally known as a writer of the Romantic, full-blooded poetical prose, and his *Women in Love* abounds in passages where such a prose reaches the height of its beauty, vividness and grandeur. But a full-length novel of four to five hundred pages cannot be written uniformly in this type of poetic prose. What we, therefore, notice here is a variety of prose which serves the purpose of dialogue, discussion, exposition, analysis, description of scenes and states of mind as well as the portrayal of the various emotions of the human heart. The prose of dialogue is generally simple, straight forward, but concise and pointed in its effect, and ready at any moment to become vivid and elaborate. The passages of general description apart from the emotional ones are remarkable for terseness of phrases which put the picture of a place or person in a nutshell. Thus the colliery village through which Ursula and Gudrun pass on their way to the marriage is

effectively pictured in one phrase—'amorphous ugliness', while the party, presided over by Hermione 'as she sits erect and silent and somewhat bemused, yet so potent, so powerful, appears to Birkin 'as figures in the hall of kings in some Egyptian tomb, where the dead all sat immemorial and tremendous'. Birkin has a caustic tongue which utters biting, but pregnant phrases, especially when he is prompted by the feeling of opposition or dislike. His encounters with Hermione bring forth many such phrases—thus, he characterises the essence of the spirit of the of the Chinese adored by the lady as 'the hot, stinging centrality of a goose in the flux of cold water and mud-fire of the cold-burning mud—the lotus mystery". Similarly, Loerke is described by him, with characteristic contemptuousness, as 'the wizard rat that swims ahead in the river of corruption, just where it falls over into the bottomless pit'.

But Birkin uses a different kind of language when he begins to explain the philosophy of love to Ursula. Here metaphors and images are used with greater frequency and certain words, such as 'polarization', 'otherness', 'balance of opposites like two stars' etc are repeated as if the speaker were anxious to hammer certain points into the mind of his listener. Similarly, in the description of the decadent African statue words and epithets are so chosen as to emphasize the nature of the decadence, wrapped in dark mystery: "Birkin recalled again the female figure : the elongated, long, long body, the curious unexpected heavy buttocks......the face with tiny features like a beetle's. This was far beyond any phallic knowledge".

Of the analytical prose which is reiterative and slowly rises to a climax the best specimen is furnished by the chapter : 'Industrial Magnate'. Mark the repetition of the key words in the following extracts :

> "It was the first great step in undoing, the first great phase of chaos, the substitution of the mechanical principle for the organic, the destruction of the organic purpose, the organic unity, and the subordination of every organic unit, to the great mechanical purpose. It was pure organic disintegration and pure mechanical organization".

This brings us to the more poetical and colourful passages descriptive of external scenes and natural objects, as well as states of mind and emotions of the heart. We give below three examples, one concerned with vivid verbal rendering of a grand natural phenomenon, the second being the description of a scene coloured with human emotion and third a passage which vivifies the terrible energy of a small animal. Following is the picture of the surface of water lit up with the broken image of the moon :

"Then again there was a burst of sound, and a burst of brilliant light, the moon had exploded on the water, and was flying asunder in flakes of white and dangerous fire. Rapidly, like white

birds, the fires all broken rose across the pond, fleeting in clamorous confusion, battling with the flock of dark waves and were forcing their way in'

For the second we may refer to the white ice-clad landscape through which Gerald and Gudrun are shown walking, each absorbed in his or her own delight. To Gudrun the scence looks like 'a garden, with the peaks for pure flowevers, and her heart gathering them'.

The third example refers to the long passage which describes the power and energy of the 'Rabit' provoked by the human effort to catch and control. We give below only a part of the description :

"The long, demon-like beast, lashed out again, spread on the air as if it were flying, looking something like a dragon, then closing up again inconceivably powerful and explosive. The man's body strung to its efforts, vibrated strongly, white-edged wrath came up in him".

Before taking up the consideration of emotional passages we have to bear in mind the fundamental fact that Lawrence, the novelist, and his characters, especially his women, have two traits in common—the hypersensitiveness of heart and empathy, the power of identification with persons and scenes, which they appear to be feeling intimately and touching, as it were, with their skin. The sight of Gerald on the back of the mare, pressing her flanks with his thighs, for example, overpowers Gudrun because she has identified herself so completely with the mare that she feels the weight of the male body crushing her own person. A similar attitude is apparent from the author's own description of the wrestling between Birkin and Gerald :

"Birkin seemed to penetrate into Gerald's more solid, more diffuse bulk, to interfuse his body through the body of the other" etc. It seems that the author himself is feeling the effect of Birkin's penetrating touch. The same empathy marks the descriptions of hatred, whether it be the hate of Hermione, or Gudrun, or Ursula or Gerald, the imagery used is almost identical and expressive of the author's own involvement :

"A blinding flash went over his brain, his body jolted. His heart had burst into flame. His consciousness was gone into his wrists, into his hand. He was one blind, incontinent desire to kill her." Equally vivid and intimate is the description of Ursula's elation as she sings before a company, conscious all the while that his lover is watching her with delighted interest.

"She felt like a bird flying in the air, as her voice soared out, enjoying herself extremely in the balance and flight of the song ; like the motion of a bird's wings that is up in the winds, sliding and playing on the air ; she played with sentimentality, supported by rapturous attention......She was dilated and brilliant, like flower in

the morning sun......her breasts thrilled, her veins were golden. She was, as happy as the sun that has just opened above the clouds.

In the passages describing the unions of men and women whether the actual sexual deed or the physical nearness we notice three important characteristics : the use of mystic phraseology ; the employment of biblical terms and ideas in the description of physical union and relationship, and, thirdly, the repetition of words and epithets which the critics were quick to note and deprecate and Lawrence had to defend his mannerism as best as he could. Thus, Gudrun reacts sharply as she catches sight of Gerald.

'She experienced a keen paroxysm, a transport of violent sensation' ; Birkin talks of the 'paradisal entry into pure single being', and as he watches Ursula's soul 'new, undefined, glimmering with the unseen, he meditates : 'This marriage with her was his resurrection and his life". Ursula contemplates the body of Birkin as the sources of mysterious fountain—'And now behold, from the smitten rock of the man's body.........came the floods of ineffable darkness and ineffable riches'. The relationship between Gudrun and Gerald has been described as 'a sort of diabolic free masonry'. She is attracted by his strong male body : "And her breast was keen with passion for him : he was so beautiful in his male stillness and mystery. A certain pure effluence of maleness......touched her with ecstasy, a thrill of pure intoxication". Referring to the nature of the relationship between Gudrun and Loerka the author writes : "The world was now finished for her. There was only the inner, individual darkness......the obscene religious mystery of ultimate reduction, the mystic frictional activities of diabolic reducing down".

These emotional passages have a remarkable rhythmical flow and appropriate imagery, which combine together to make them poetical. In this respect, the long passage, a purple patch in the novel, which describes the frantic dance of Gudrun before the cattle is deserving of close attention. The whole description has been presented in a single sentence, in order to convey to us the impression of the continuous rhythm of ecstatic dance.

Another poetic device which has been employed throughout the novel is symbol and imagery. Apart from the episodes and situation which have obvious symbolic value, such as Gerald on the back of the Arab mare trying resolutely to control its restiveness and Gudrun and Gerald striving together to tame the energetic Rabbit, significantly named Bismarck, there are clusters of images and symbols which accout for remarkably close-knit texture of the novel. Moreover, the symbolic technique of Lawrence is more akin to that of the 19th-century romantics, including W. B. Yeats, one of the last romantics, than to the method of the French symbolist poets. It means that the symbolic meaning is based upon the literal significance of the objects which it expands and enriches, but does not obliterate as the symbols of the French masters like Mallarme

often tend to do. Most of the symbols and images are drawn from nature and refer to familiar objects—light, darkness, water, mud, buds and flowers, birds in motion, trees and plants, both wholesome and noxious, and snow and ice in all its whiteness and coldness. Passion is generally presented as fire, flame or lightning, and the effluence of passion passing from one person to another is imaged as 'dark electricity'. Sexual union is often described as a plunge into the partner, while the delight it affords is sometimes describled as a flood which overpowers the senses. There are interconnected symbols which signify death and destructiveness, such as water-mud-coldness, whiteness, culminating in the white snowy wilderness where Gudrun and Gerald, both creatures of the Arctic north, meet in their last desperate duel, which leads to the death of Gerald and nearly kills Gudrun. The sun being the source of life, warmth and energy is a male symbol ; while the moon with her coldness, whiteness and ghostliness is the symbol of female virginity and possessiveness which mean the negation of spontaneous love and life. When Birkin is casting stones into the pool in order to destroy the white ghostly image of the moon he is simply demonstrating his ruthless opposition to the idea of the coldness and possessiveness of woman, the mother of man, who adopts many tricks and disguises to keep her male partner tied to her apron strings. But the full examination of the complex image-clusters is a major problem which demands an independent consideration. Enough has now been said to prove that Lawrence is one of those modern novelists who have rendered the boundary between prose and poetry extremely fluid and indefinable.

Q. 5. Examine the symbolic and imagistic patterns in ***Women in Love*****.**

Ans. Symbolic pattern arises where a set of symbols recur throughout the novel, binding together scenes and characters and creating a complex fabric of meaning and significance. A critic has commented very aptly on this point :

"Where there is symbol, a kind of magnetic field of incident, image and rhythm is set up, drawing to itself clusters of interrelated suggestions. Of course the bond of the logical relation of ideas is not completely missing, on the other hand the images and rhythms are not to be thought of as wild vines intertwining about a supporting line of logic, embellishing it with their foliage and giving it the factitious air of a living thing. Rather does image call to image, scene to scene, rhythm to rhythm, as colour calls to colour, the same or opposite, in painting." The relation is not linear, but circular. 'It suggests a to-and-fro in all directions at once'. Moreover, a symbolic structure being an organic whole, its particular parts may be symbolically meaningful in themselves.

A.B. Bertocci has analysed the 'water-party' (Chapter XV) as a significant symbolic unit, which the centre of the whole story. This

chapter marks the culmination of the first movement of the story of love, where the women have almost committed themselves to their men. The party has been organized by Gerald's father but its moving figure is young Gerald himself, who has already been associated with the watery element. In 'Diver' (Chapter IV) 'though the morning was full of a new creation', he is pictured as a 'white' figure, launched as a 'white' arc through the air, moving in the 'translucency of the grey, uncreated water', which he dominated 'just himself of the watery world', 'like a Nibelung, and loving the violent impulse of the very cold water against his limb, buoying him up', while Gudrun who has been watching him, envies him, 'this momentary possession of pure isolation and fluidity'. His isolation has already been stressed by references to his having killed his brother, which has given him a Cain-like isolation. He has already involved Gudrun somehow in the submission to which he has reduced the Arab mare, and now Gudrun slaps him for interrupting her mad dance before the cattle. But he declares his love 'with a swooning terrible burden on his mind' and grasps her hand 'as if his hand were iron'. This creates the image of imprisonment which his love means to Gudrun. As they glide in the canoe, sitting close to each other, he feels the growing distance between himself and his lady love. Very soon 'he melts into oneness with the whole' as in pure perfect sleep 'and perfect lapsing out'. Then comes the shattering cry and confusion on the water which makes the heart of Gudrun cold who realizes as if 'this was bound to happen', as she views Gerald as a man naturally belonging to dread and catastrophe'. Gerald dives to save his drowning sister, but all in vain, and he climbs up in the boat again and to Gudrun 'the beauty and subjection of his loins' becomes a sign of the 'terrible hopelessness of hate' and as she hears 'the decisive, instrumental voice' she feels an unbearable isolation'. Gerald then talks of his discovery of the underworld—as cold as hell—"It is so cold, actually, and so endless......you wonder how it is so many are alive up here. Thus the love of Gerald and Gudrun gets associated with death and 'the curse of Cain' and the cluster of symbols emphasizing it is white-water-cold.

Contrast this picture with that in 'An Island' (XI) where Birkin and Ursula are shown sailing in a leaky canoe. Ursula hesitates before the 'little jungle of rank plants before them, evil smelling' but Birkin determined to encompass all experience had explored it. The trip is by no means pleasant ; they quarrel and go into sulks. "But at one point, when he is dropping daisies on the pond which float away, face up like points exaltation' here and there, she felt 'some sort of control was being put on her'. And when they were once more on the 'free land' Ursula saw that the boat of purple chocolate paper which she had made and dropped carelessly into the water, was escorting the daisies and that they had become a convoy of rafts"—a symbol of their successful union and fulfilment.

We may now follow the tracery of symbolic relationship by taking up a few separate symbols. Whiteness, for example, is a symbol of death, which Birkin associates with the race of the North, of which Gerald is, to him, a fit representative : 'Birkin thought of Gerald. He was one of those strange, white wonderful demons from the north fulfilled in the destructive frost mystery'. This suggestion is further exploited in other contexts. For example, in the 'Moony' Birkin is throwing stones into the pond to destroy the image of the moon:"It is the white and deathly smile of the moon, the white body of fire in water; that leaping up white, in fragments like white birds, refuses to be violated. When its white petals take the rose shape, then especially must this whiteness be destroyed, for the rose is life-giving and Ursula sees herself as the rose of paradisal bliss'. For Birkin fighting 'the moon-brilliant hardness', the alternative was 'the lovely golden light of spring, transfused through Ursula's eyes, though this was a paradisal bird that could never be netted, it must fly by itself to the heart".

Gerald and Gudrun are creatures of the North, symbol of death and destruction, and 'whiteness' is one of the fatal bonds between them. This is brought out in the chapter—Rabbit—where they recognize this fact and are terrified.

"The scream of the rabbit, after the violent tussle, seemed to have torn the veil of her consciousness. He looked at her, and the *whitish electric gleam* in his face intensified......He had the power of lightning in his nerves, she seemed like a soft recipient of his magical, *hideous white fire*. She looked at him and a slight sinister smile contracted her *white* face. Glancing up at him, into his eyes, she revealed again the mocking, *white-cruel recognition*. This white-cruel recognition reminds us of another equally fatal recognition of the nature of Gerald.

"In his clear northern flesh and his fair hair was a glisten like sun-shine, refracted through the crystal of his eyes. His gleaming beauty, maleness, like a young, good humoured smiling wolf".

The cumulative force of this 'whiteness' as a symbol of death, explodes in the last scene where they are shown walking through the cold, glittering, white snowy landscape, full of a strange elation and energy. To the entranced imagniation of Gudrun the snow-flakes look like the flowers of paradise which she is happy to gather in her lap, while Gerald was translated into a super human being : "He felt strong as winter ; his hand were living metal, invincible and not to be turned aside. He felt strong enough to leap over all the barrier and the limits and come back again". But it is a destructive strength under the impulse of which he leaps over the barriers of life into the mysterious kingdom of death from whose bourn no traveller did ever return.

Remarkable again is the fact that Ursula, who is on the side of love and life, feels disgusted with the hard, white, endless glitter

of the lanscape and yearns for the dark, fruitful earth that lies beyond it.

With water, white and cold, we may add 'mud' to complete the cluster. Birkin describes the goose in relation to the spirit of the Chinese to the exasperated Hermione: The Chinese, he says, live from, 'the hot, stinging' centrality of a goose in the flux of *cold water and mud*......fire of the *cold-burning mud*—the lotus mystery. And the projectile with which Hermione seeks to destroy Birkin, is a Chinese ball of lapis-lazuli.

In Chapter X—'Sketch-Book'—Gudrun is seated 'like a Buddhist' staring at the water plants that rise from the 'festering chill' : "She knew how they rose out of the mud. Then a man 'in white' appears rowing on the water. Gerald, she recognized, 'was her escape from the heavy slough of the pale, underworld, automatic colliers". He started out of mud ; as he bent forward rowing ; there was 'a whiteness he seemed to enclose'. Birkin's letter refers to 'this process of active corruption, with all its flowers of mud. Pussum is 'a flower of mud', also 'a red lotus in dreadful, flowering nakedness'.

In Gudrun's knowlede of the mud, much as she may seek to escape the vision of the Thames mud in 'Water-Party' and the crowd that evokes it, lies her destiny. Hence his strange attraction to 'the automatic collier'. Gerald's kiss under the bridge will be a collier's kiss ; he will take her with the mud from his father's grave on his boots ; and in the dawn, as he puts on trousers and braces, what saves him from his ridicule is his resemblance to a collier". This also explains her attraction to Loerke, the genius of the mud and sewer. 'And just as in Gerald she sought to be saved from the mud by the master of mechanisms who started out of the mud, so in Loerke she sought that transcendence of man's objectness through the art of mockery." Loerke's art is "the *fleur du mal* of mechanism in its tendency to exploit and abandon its models in the very flush of youth and in its effort to transmute subjection to mechanism into some kind of a victor by the alchemy of an inhuman art".

The name of Loerke recalls the animal imagery in the novel which comes separately as well as in combination with some phrases and expressions and symbolizes decadence, corruption, disintegration and abnormal intercourse between man and woman. We may start with Birkin's account of the African statue of a woman, with the following particulars and implications under lined :

Her cultured elegance, her diminished beetle face, her heavy buttocks below her slim long loins. She is the symbol of the decadence which follows the death of a civilization. It is a long process and is marked by a narrow sort of knowledge. In the case of the dark Africans it was purely sensual, something beyond *the phallic cult*—in disintegration and dissolution, knowledge such as the beetles have.

This description with its sinister implication throws a flood of light on the nature of the relationship which Gudrun seeks with Loreke, who has the largest share of the animal imagery. The author has referred to his 'quick, full eyes, like a mouse's' ; to Birkin he is a little monster of darkness ; a gnawing little negation, gnawing at the roots of life ; he lives like a rat in the river of corruption, just where it falls over into the bottomless pit ; he fascinates women who want to expose the sewer, because 'he is the wizard rat that swims ahead'. About his relationship with Gudrun the author has said that 'they kindled themselves at the subtle lust of the Egyptians or the Mexicans'. The implication of this comes out in the passage, describing what Gudrun wanted to experience with him.

"What then, what next ? Was it sheer blind force of passion that would satisfy her now ? Not this, but the subtle thrills of extreme sensation in reduction. There was only the inner, individual darkness, sensation within the ego, the extreme religious mystery of ultimate reduction, the mystic frictional activities of diabolic reducing down, disintegrating the vital organic body of life".

That even Birkin-Ursula relationship is not free from this taint is suggested by several references. The initiative is taken by Birkin, who finds a link of intimacy between the African statue and himself, and gradually brings Ursula to accept this mindless sensuality to complete their experience. Consider the following passage :

> "She had thought there was no source deeper than the *phallic source*. And now, behold, from the smitten rock of the man's body......deeper, further in mystery than the phallic source, came the floods of ineffable darkness and ineffable riches".

Again, "When they were alone in the darkness, she felt the strange licentiousness of him hovering upon her. Her impulse was to repel him violently, break from his spell of mocking brutishness, but she wanted to submit, she wanted so know. His licentiousness was repulsively attractive. They might do as they liked—this she realized as she went to sleep. What was degrading ? Degrading things were real, with a different reality—so bestial ? so bestial, they two ! She winced. But after all why not ? Why not be bestial and go the whole round of experience ? She was free, when she knew everything, and no dark shameful things were denied her".

The meaning of all this is clarified by certain remarks made by Lawrence elsewhere *apropos* of homosexuality : 'I like men to be beasts—but insects—one insect mounted on another—oh God ! they reminded me of lice or bugs—I dream of beetles'.

It is not necessary to labour the point any further. Enough has now been said to stress the fact that the clusters of symbols and images serve to link together characters and incidents and thereby they contribute to that thematic unity which underlies the loose external structure of the novel.

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